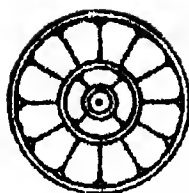


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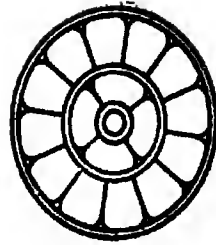
*A Quarterly Devoted to the Exposition of
Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future*



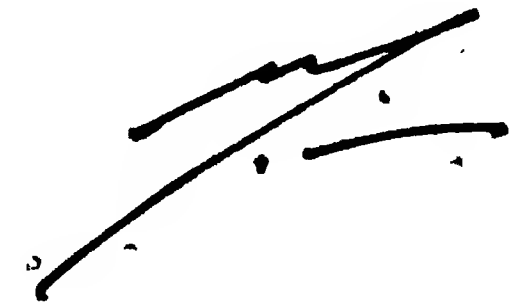
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The Advent



If in man the seed
of aspiration is watered
with true spirituality
then he will grow into
Divinity.



The ADVENT

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Inner happiness can only come
by right living.

—SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS

NOTES

GO THROUGH

IT is said one must be free from human love if one is to enjoy Divine Love. But to be free is usually taken to mean to reject, to reject naturally by force, that is to say, to coerce, to repress and suppress. "But who can coerce a force of Nature?" the Gita asks. Indeed a force of Nature like human passion cannot be dominated or obliterated by force; it is sure to come back with a redoubled vigour. Nor can such an elemental feeling be overlooked, side-tracked or by-passed. This way also the element is sure to come back and catch you from behind.

The best way to tackle the thing is, as the Mother says, to go through it. To go through means to stand and face it and not run away from it. To go through does not mean, however, to satisfy or to indulge the urge—that makes you a slave of it more and more; you get all the more entangled and can never hope to be free.

You stand and face in order to seize the truth, the reality of the thing you have to deal with. You have to purify it and clean it in order to remove the dust that covers the gold. If it is human love, to purify means to free it from selfishness, from egoistic desire, the sense of possession. Instead, you love simply for the joy of loving without any expectation or demand of return. You find in the end that this way of loving brings to you a greater delight, a new thrill and poignancy, proper to a pure feeling.

Indeed not only love but all human impulses and urges are to be dealt with in the same way. The Gita furnishes a beautiful and crucial example. The Gita teaches man to go through the field of activity and not to reject or avoid it. The whole of the Gita is an ideal lesson in the technique of going through. The Gita says, do not renounce work but dedicate it—not *karmatyāga* but *karmanyāsa*. What does this dedication mean? The first step in the process of dedication is desirelessness—to do work without desire. It is usually thought that desire is the source and origin of work. If you have no desire, you have no need or impulse to work. But this is a very superficial view of things. The impulse for work springs from elsewhere, from a deeper and impersonal source. The true spirit in which you should work is, as the Gita enjoins, to do a work because it is a thing to be done, not because you desire it. So naturally you do not hanker for the fruit of your action. First then, no attachment to the action itself, then no attachment to the fruit that it brings. This can be done only when you are unselfish. Not only unselfishness but you have to go a step farther, to selflessness. So then there are these three stages in the process of dedication or purification. First to work without desire, without attachment to the result of the work. Then you will be able to see that you are an instrument only, the work is being done through you. At the beginning you are a desireless, unselfish doer of works, next you see yourself as a detached witness of your action and finally you see that the action happening in you is Nature working in you, Nature the instrument of the Divine. Finally yourself is no longer there, it is the Divine alone that is and acts.

What has been said of works is true of all activities in man, his thoughts, feelings, impulses, physical acts. It is the process

of going through and meeting the reality beyond, which hides, encloses itself with all its envelopes or coverings which you pass through.

In fact it is to the Divine that the dedication has to be made. Dedication means offering. All works, says the Gita, have to be offered to the Supreme, that is the meaning of sacrifice, the sacrifice of works (Karmayajna), all works come from the Divine and they are to go back to Him, that is how they are purified and through them thus purified and elevated, man attains his goal, union with the Supreme. However, not works alone but each and every element of the human being—even love and passion and all the grosser urges—do come from the only one Source, the Divine. They become impure and distorted, muddy and poisonous when man seeks to appropriate, that is to say, misappropriate them as his own personal belongings. To give up the sense of ownership is the core of dedication. You are not the possessor, the Divine is the only possessor. In fact, you also do not belong to yourself, you belong to the Divine. That is the ceremony of sacrifice you have to undertake—install the Divinity in all your parts and functions. That is how you purify and divinise your human elements. That is how you go through ignorance and mortality and arrive at knowledge and immortality.

LIFE IN AND THROUGH DEATH

The soul carries the body even like a corpse, says a scripture. It is a dead inert mass of inconscience weighing upon the conscious being that is behind. Such is the burden of life that the soul bears through its earthly existence. The image is beautifully delineated in the Indian legend of Shiva and Sati. Sati is dead, the bereaved Shiva goes about in anguish with the dead body of Sati flung upon his shoulder. Shiva is to be relieved of this burden, otherwise the creation will go to destruction. The prayer went to Vishnu and Vishnu hurled his discus that cut to pieces the corpse of Sati—the pieces were fifty-two in number—and each spot where a piece, a limb of Sati, fell became a great place of pilgrimage. Even so, the world in its inconscience lies heavy on the secret Consciousness that lies behind. It lies almost smothered under the dead weight of the

inconscient and the unconsciousness. But the Divine Grace has entered into the inertial mass and split it up, entered into each particle as a spark of consciousness to turn gradually the dead matter into a rising and evolving tier of consciousness.

Creation started originally with an absolutely inconscient existence. It is the pressure of an indwelling spirit—the Grace descending into matter—that has forced matter to burst into, to flower into forms of light and consciousness. The pressure is ever-present and the flowering continues into higher and higher modes of the Divine Consciousness. The figure '52' of the mythological legend denotes perhaps the integral multiplicity of the manifested universe. We may suggest an interpretation just to satisfy a mental curiosity: $52 = 50 + 2$; and 50 is 5×10 . The number 5 is very well-known as representing the five planes of consciousness, and as there is a descending and an ascending movement in each level—that gives the number 10. And 5 times 10 is 50. This makes up the manifested creation. The remaining two are the Supreme Divine and his Shakti, or two unities at each end—the one above, the one below. This however may be considered as a playful calculation meaning to represent as I said, a multiple integrality of existence.

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The injunction is : you must die to the world if you want the life Eternal. Even so you must die to yourself if you want the Divine. The existing life which your ego has built up is a life of ignorance, misery and decadence. Death is indeed the natural and inevitable consequence; but this is a death in ignorance and bondage, it does not lead you to liberation and freedom. The dying that liberates is a conscious, deliberate movement of intelligence and will; dying to the world means withdrawing yourself from the world and turning within. Dying to yourself means withdrawing from your egohood and turning to the self, the being that is beyond. This withdrawal is to be done constantly and consistently in all the parts of the being. The mind is to move away from its thoughts, the vital from its desires and impulses and the body from its hunger and thirst. The first result of this withdrawal is a division of the being, an inner passive part

and an outer active part. The inner part becomes gradually a mere witness and the outer part a mere mechanical functioning. When the withdrawal is so complete that the outer being or the world has no effect upon the inner, does not raise any ripple in it by its touch or contiguity then is accomplished the real death. Then it is said the outer existence, the material life does not continue long, it comes sooner or later to a dead stop. Thus the inner being is liberated completely and is freed into the life beyond, the Divine Existence, the Brahman. It is said that when each and every seed of the various elements that compose the being, that sprouts into the luxuriant tree of material life, when each and every seed is burnt up by the heat of mounting 'tapas', the force of aspiring consciousness, then there is no more chance or possibility of an ignorant earthly life, one is then naturally born into the Life of the Eternal. That is the final, the supreme death which is *laya* or *pralaya*.

To live away from life and consequently away from death is one thing, comparatively easy; but to live in life and consequently in death is another thing, somewhat more difficult. To withdraw oneself from the field of death and retire in the immutability beyond or some form of it is what was attempted in the ancient days. But there has been side by side always a growing tendency in man to stay here in this vale of tears under the shadow of death, to live dangerously and face the Evil and conquer it here itself; for death is not a mere negation an annihilation of the reality, it is only a mask put over the reality or is its obverse. Tear off or remove the disguise, you will see the smiling radiant Godhead behind.

The gold is there, the purest gold, but it is crusted over with dross. The dross is to be eliminated and the noble metal freed. Indeed each element of the being wherever and whatever it is, each corpuscle, mental, vital or physical is ambivalent—it is a polarised entity consisting of two parts or two ends, one pure, the other impure. The ancients thought that the whole creation is impure, the only pure substance is the Divine. The Sankhya posited clearly the demarcation between Purusha, the Conscious Being secreted above and behind and the entire Prakriti which is absolute unconsciousness. But as we have said, a new revelation has been slowly coming up which speaks of a different conclusion and a different destiny

for man and the universe. Each element of the created universe has a double nature, it is both conscious and unconscious, it is both immortal and mortal. And furthermore, the two are not united or soldered together inextricably so that if one is eliminated the other gets eliminated automatically. Life and death appear to be bound together absolutely and eternally; in fact, however, it is not so. Even in life, Life can be established in its single pure reality free from the normal counter-point of Death. Purusha is not the only conscious element in or above creation. Prakriti is not merely the unconscious being. The unconscious Prakriti is only the apparent aspect of the Higher Prakriti, the Para Prakriti, which is supremely conscious, for it is one with the Supreme Purusha.

This Higher Prakriti is the inner reality of each created cell of the universe. And it is always insisting and working for the elimination of its counter-part, the inferior Prakriti; and evolution, human or cosmic is nothing but the gradual corroding of the inferior Prakriti by the pressure of the Light-Energy of the Higher Prakriti. One day when this lower Prakriti is dissolved in this way in each cell, the fullness of the radiant manifestation, an embodiment of the Divine Reality will be realised upon this material earth made spiritual, in this human body made Divine.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM : (v) REPRESSIVE MEASURES

MR. MACKARNESS' BILL

WE find in *India* to hand by men last week the full text to Mr. Mackerness' speech in introducing the Bill by which he proposes to amend the Regulation of 1818 and safeguard the liberties of the subject in India. We are by no means enamoured of the step which Mr. Mackarness has taken. We could have understood a proposal to abolish the regulation entirely and disclaimed the necessity or permissibility of coercion in India. This would be a sound Liberal position to take, but it would not have the slightest chance of success in England and would be no more than an emphatic form of protest not expected or intended to go further. British Liberalism is and has always been self-regarding, liberal at home, hankering after benevolent despotism and its inevitable consummation in dependencies. To ask Liberal England to give up the use of coercion in emergencies would be to ask it to contradict a deep-rooted instinct. We could have understood, again, a Bill which while leaving the Government powers of an extraordinary nature to deport the subject, under careful safeguards, in unusual and well defined circumstances and for no more than a fixed period, would yet leave the aggrieved subject an opportunity after his release of vindicating his character and, if it appeared that he had been deported unwarrantably and without due inquiry or in spite of complete innocence, of obtaining fitting compensation. Such an act would meet both the considerations of State and the considerations of justice. It would leave the Government ample power in emergencies but would take from it the freedom to deport out of caprice, panic or unscrupulous reactionism. Deportation would then be a rare act of State necessity, not an autocratic *lettre-de-cachet* used to bolster up injustice or crush all opposition to the continuance of autocratic absolutism. Mr. Mackarness'

Bill seems to us to leave the essence of deportation just where it was before. The changes made are purely palliative and palliative not of the unjust, irritating and odious character of the measure but of the apparent monstrosity of deporting a man without even letting him or his friends of the world know what charge lay against him or whether any charge lay against him. It is this which gives an ultra-Russian character to the Regulation and makes the Liberal conscience queasy. The proposed changes are a salve to that conscience, not a benefit to the victim of deportation. It makes his position, if anything, worse. It is bad to be punished without any charge, it is worse to be punished on a charge which you are debarred to all time from disproving.

There are three changes which the Bill contemplates. Instead of being able to confine a man until farther orders the Viceroy has to renew his sanction every three months, a change which may have some deterrent effect on a Viceroy with a Liberal conscience but to others will mean merely a quarterly expenditure of a drop of ink and a few strokes of the pen. Another and more important change is the provision that, to qualify for deportation, "a British subject must be reasonably suspected of having been guilty of treasonable practices or of a crime punishable by law, being an act of violence or intimidation and tending to interfere with or disturb the maintenance of law and order." "That" thinks Mr. Mackarness "insures in the first place that a man must have been guilty of some definite offence. At any rate it is intended to provide for that." Unfortunately the intention is all, there is no real provision for carrying it out, except the clause that the warrant shall contain a definite statement of the character of the crime. How will this clause help the alleged intention of the Bill ? It is only the character of the crime that has to be defined and, if the authorities relying on a Mazrue Haque or a Rakhal Laha frame a charge say against Sjt. Surendranath Banerjee of waging war or abetting or conspiring to wage war or financing unlawful assemblies and incontinently deport him, would the Liberal conscience be satisfied ? Or would it be possible for the Moderate leader to meet this charge, however definite in character ? It is evident that to carry out the "intention" of the Bill it would be necessary to name the specific act or acts which constitute the offence and the time and circumstances of commission, for it is only a precise accusation that

can be met. Even if a charge be precise in its terms, Mr. Mackarness' Bill provides no redress to the deportee. All that he can do is to submit a "representation" to the officials who have deported him. Those who know the ways of the bureaucrat can tell beforehand the inevitable answer to such representations, "The Government have considered your representation and see no cause to alter the conclusions they had arrived at upon sufficient and reliable information." So the deportation will stand, the charge will stand and the last condition of the deportee will be worst than his first. The only advantage the Bill will secure is the greater opportunities for effective heckling in the House of Commons if facts can be secured which throw doubt on the charge; but the Government has always the answer that its evidence is reliable and conclusive but for reasons of State policy it is not advisable to disclose either its nature or its sources, and the relics of the Liberal conscience will be satisfied. As things stand the deportations have made even some Imperialistic consciences uneasy and that advantage will be lost under the new Bill.

Mr. Mackarness has admitted that the regulations are absolutely hateful and he would prefer to propose their entire abolition if such a proposal had any chance of acceptance by a British House of Commons. His amendments will not make them less hateful, they will only make them less calmly absurd. That is a gain to the Government, not to us or to justice. The only provisions that would make deportation a reasonable though still autocratic measure of a State would be to allow the Viceroy to deport a person, stating the charge against him for a period of not more than six months and oblige the Government to provide the deportee on release with full particulars as to the nature of the information on which he was deported, so that he might seek redress against malicious slander by individuals or, if it were considered impolitic to disclose the sources of information, for wanton and arbitrary imprisonment by the authorities. The measure would still be oppressive but it would then give some chance to an agrieved and innocent man, so long as a sense of justice and some tradition of independence still linger in the higher tribunals of the land. Such a measure would have been a moderate measure and would have left the essential absolutism of Government in India unchanged. But even to this

Bill does not rise. It is noticeable that the only Irish Nationalist whose name was on the Bill repudiated it as soon as he heard Mr. Mackarness' speech, on the ground that he had been under the impression that the Bill went much further than was now stated. The other names were those of British Liberals or Conservatives. This is significant of the difference between the sympathy we may expect even from conscientious English Liberals and the real fellow-feeling of a Nationalist who has himself known what it is to live under the conditions of bureaucratic coercion. Mr. Mackarness has fought the cause of the deportees in the spirit of genuine Liberalism, but his Bill is a concession to that watery British substitute for it which is only Imperialism afraid of its convictions.

THE POLICE BILL

The Police Bill has passed the Committee and next week, it is rumoured, will be made law. It is a provision for giving absolute power to the police Commissioner and his underlings. It is true that the power is limited in time in certain respects, but so long as it lasts it is arbitrary, absolute, without checks and, practically, without appeal. We hear that the present Police Commissioner resents any proposal to put a check on his absolute power as a personal insult. If so, he is in good company, for he only follows the example of that great philosopher and democratic statesman, Lord Morley, who resents democratic criticism of his measures and actions as a crime and sacrilege and a petty amendment of the present provisions for the deportation of inconvenient persons as a vote of censure. The spirit of absolutism fostered by arbitrary Government in India is not only swallowing up the old British virtues in India itself but encroaching on the free spirit of England. The powers of prohibition, regulation and arrest provided for in the Bill will exalt Mr. Halliday into the Czar of Calcutta. It is noticeable that any man may be arrested for the breach of any law by any policeman without a warrant and be sentenced to a fine of a hundred Rupees or, for certain political offences among others, to a month's hard labour. Any meeting can be stopped for a week at the sweet will and discretion of an individual. The provisions for search and

entry of the police into houses and so called public places are so ample as to give a power of inquisition and domiciliary visit second only to the Russian. Even boardings, messes and private lodging houses are liable to entry at any hour and on any pretext. And by an inspired improvement and the stringent Bombay Act no action of the police, however vexatious unwarranted and malicious, can be punished unless the agrieved party can prove bad faith, a condition which in nine cases out of ten of malicious harrassment is impossible of satisfaction. It is a sound principle that where a citizen has been causelessly harassed, the burden of proving good faith rests on the harasser. An opposite proviso means the destruction of the liberty of the person. No man's personal freedom and dignity henceforth will be safe for a moment from the whims of the lowest policeman in the street. The authorities may say that this is not the purposed object of the Bill. We have nothing to do with the intention of the framers, we have to do only with the provisions of the law itself, and it is enough if all these things are rendered possible under the provisions. To make bad laws and plead good intentions is an old evasion of weak and violent rulers.

THE POLITICAL MOTIVE

That there is a political motive behind the Bill, any child can see and to conceal it only the most flimsy precautions have been taken. The prohibitions of public meetings can have no reference to any but Swadeshi meetings, the reference to objectionable cries is obviously aimed at the national cry of Bandemataram and the power of harassing under the pretext of regulation public processions and meetings can have no objective but the revived meetings and processions which have shown that the national movement was not dead but only suspended. Other provisions of the Bill may be dictated by the soul object of strengthening the hands, already overstrong, of the Calcutta Police in keeping order, but the nature and wording of these provisions coupled with the amazingly comprehensive definition of "public place" leave us no option but to see the obvious political motive behind. It is possible for the Police Commissioner under these provisions to paralyze every legitimate form of public activity

in the city of Calcutta. It is no use sheltering under the provisions of the Bombay Act. The Bombay Act has been used to paralyze public activity of a kind inconvenient to the Government in that city. What, moreover, was the necessity of suddenly resorting to the stringency of the Bombay Act at this particular juncture. It is not alleged that any of the meetings or processions recently organised were disorderly or led to disturbance or public inconvenience. The only fresh emergency was the political.

A HINT FROM DINAJPUR

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* notices a case from Dinaipur which may give a few hints to Sir Edward Baker if he really wants or is wanted to establish police autocracy in Calcutta. Mr. Garlick there justified the caning of witnesses and accused by the police as a necessary "method of examination" without which the administration of justice in this country cannot be carried on. He says "I dare say the police frequently quickened the witness' answers with a cut from their riding canes. Such *methods of examination* are no doubt to be deprecated but without them I do not suppose the police would get any information at all". The case will come up before the High Court and we await with interest the view that authority will take of this novel legal dictum. Meanwhile why should not Sir Edward Baker take time by the forelock and, after a now familiar method, validate such "methods" beforehand by a clause in his Police Bill empowering any policeman to cut with a cane any citizen whom he may fancy guilty of breaking any law so as to persuade him to desist? Of course the said policeman will not be liable to punishment unless it can be proved that he cut in bad faith.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

We extract elsewhere some very telling criticisms from the pen of the well-known positivist Mr. Frederic Harrison on the treatment of political prisoners. This is a subject on which a Nationalist writer is naturally somewhat shy of dilating, as any stress on the brutality and callousness of the treatment to which not only convicted but

undertrial prisoners of gentle birth and breeding are sometime subjected in Indian jails, might be misinterpreted by our opponent as an unwillingness to face the penalties which repressive legislation inflicts on those who cherish great aspirations for their race and country. But two instances have occurred recently which compel attention. One is the death of the convicted prisoner Ashok Nandi of consumption brought on by exposure and neglect during fever in the undertrial period of the Alipore Case. We exonerate from blame the jail authorities who were exceptionally humane men and would have been glad to deal humanly with the prisoners. But their blamelessness only brings out the barbarity of a system which allows of the confinement of a delicate ailing lad in a punishment cell exposed night after night to the dews and cold of an unhealthy season, and that without his having committed any fault or shown anything but the mildest and most docile of characters. The other case is that of Mr. Achyutrao Kohlatkar of Nagpur, editor of the *Deshsevak*, a gentleman of distinguished education, ability and character, who was convicted for the publication in his paper of the reports of S. Aurobindo Ghose's speeches delivered at a time when Mr. Kohlatkar was absent from Nagpur. The Sessions Judge of Alipore declared on the police reports of these speeches that so far from being seditious or violent they told in favour of the speaker and not against him. We find it difficult to believe that the newspaper report of speeches from which the police would extract nothing that was not in the speaker's favour, could be at all seditious. Be that as it may, Mr. Kohlatkar was convicted and perhaps, according to the "strong man" code of ethics, forfeited claim for generous treatment by his refusal to apologise. We have heard rumours of treatment being meted out to him which can only be described as studied brutality and the evidence of eye-witnesses which have seen the condition to which he was reduced, do not encourage us to reject these reports as fabrications. Finally, the refusal of the Central Provinces Government to face independent medical inspection and so dispose of the serious allegations publicly preferred put a very ugly aspect on this case. If the allegations are proved, they amount to a treatment which would evoke the loudest indignation and reprobation in England if applied under the same circumstances in

another country. But we cherish little hope of redress. The prison system of the European nations is only a refined and systematised savagery perpetuating the methods of ancient and mediaeval barbarity in forms that do not at once shock the eye. Besides, the account of the recent starvation strike of the Suffragettes has shown what callous and brutal treatment can be inflicted by English Officials in England itself even on women, and women of education, good birth, position and culture, guilty only of political obstruction and disorderliness. Yet this is the civilisation for which we are asked to sacrifice the inheritance of our forefathers !

AN OFFICIAL FREAK

We suppose in a bureaucracy it is inevitable that officials should be masters and be able to inflict inconvenience and loss on the citizen without any means of redress. Last Monday the publication of a new weekly named *Dharma*, edited by Aurobindo Ghosh, was due and had been widely announced. The issue was ready and the printer duly attended the Police Court to declare his responsibility for printing and publishing the periodical. Except under very unusual circumstances this is a mere formality and one would have thought no difficulty could intervene, for nothing could persuade the Court Official to refrain from delaying the acceptance till the next day. It was pointed out that this would entail unnecessary inconvenience and perhaps considerable financial loss, but that naturally did not concern him as he was the master of the public and not their servant. The next day a variation of the same vexatious procedure was repeated. It was whispered, we do not know with what truth, that the first delay was for the Criminal Investigation Department to have time to find out whether the printer had been convicted in any sedition case. If so it was futile delay. There is no concealment of the responsibility with regard to this paper. The name of the editor and proprietor was openly given and the printer was there to accept his responsibility. This does not look like intended sedition. If here were any doubt, the required information could easily have been gained from the Manager of the paper who was present and would no doubt have been glad to save delay and loss by stating the printer's

antecedents. It was not likely that he would conceal a conviction as that would be a thing impossible to suppress. But then, if officialdom were to acquire a common sense, the laws of Nature would be sadly contravened and it is better to inflict loss on individuals than to upset a law of Nature.

THE LAW AND THE NATIONALIST

There are several points connected with the national movement in which the law is in a state of dangerous uncertainty. The exact limit of sedition is one of them, the matter of social boycott is another. We believe that social boycott involving no violence or direct coercion is perfectly legal but it is certain that not only the Anglo-Indian community at large but a portion of the judiciary would be glad to find it illegal. Any doubt on such subjects ought to be removed, for although ignorance is in itself no excuse in law, it ought to be a defence when it is created by the uncertainties of the law itself. We think the Nationalist ought to take every opportunity of testing the extent of the liberties still allowed to us in the ordinary course of the law. We are aware that a section of Nationalist opinion has held that our principle of Swadeshi-Boycott ought to debar us from taking any part in any legal proceedings whatever. While many of us had openly expressed our admiration for the heroic stoicism with which this principle has been adhered to in many cases, we have not held it binding on any except those fine consciences to whom it appealed nor would we allow it to guide our own action. We hold that no Nationalist should resort to the British Courts under the present political conditions as against a brother Nationalist or in any circumstances which give him a real choice. If he is dragged to the criminal or civil courts by others he is entitled to defend himself to the end by all means that the law provides. If arbitration is refused in a case where his interests are attacked, he is absolved from the self-denying obligation, or if the law of the land compels him as a landholder or propertied or business man to protect himself by certain legal forms, it is obvious that he cannot deny himself that protection without imperilling work or wealth necessary to nation. The same overriding rule of necessity which compels us to exclude machinery

and other instruments of education, work and production from the Boycott, limits the application of the arbitration principle and the abstention from British Courts. Formerly we were content to go our way in doubtful cases, such as the limits of the law of sedition, putting our own interpretation and taking the consequences of a too elastic reading of the law. We even held ourselves justified in the case of unjust and arbitrary laws in breaking them not by violence but peacefully and passively, as the Dissenters did in England, so as to get them either tested or altered. This we still hold to be morally and politically justifiable. But the outbreak of Terrorism compels us to restrict our circle of passive resistance lest even by the most peaceful rejection of unjust laws we should seem to be encouraging lawlessness and disorder. Still, if we are to observe the law scrupulously, just or unjust, we must know what the law is and now that there is a man at the head of judicial administration who knows the law and tries to keep to it, we ought to take advantage of this now unusual circumstance, and use every opportunity to fix the legal position of our movement and its methods.

AN EXTRAORDINARY PROHIBITION

Pandit Bhoje Dutt of Agra has been in our midst for some time, and none had hitherto imagined that he was a political agitator or his teachings dangerous to the public peace. We all knew him as secretary of the Suddhi Samaj, a religious body having for its object the re-admission of converts from Hinduism into the fold of the religion and also, we believe, the admission of converts to Hinduism from other religions into Hindu society with the full status of Hindus. The society has been working for sometime with signal success and no breach of the law or the peace. Yet the other day Mr. Swinhoe thought fit to prohibit the Pandit from lecturing in Calcutta and the public from attending his lectures for the space of two months. We reproduce the order as it accords singularly clear proof of the contention, always advanced by Nationalists, that under the present system such public liberty as we enjoy, is not an ensured right but an insecure concession, based not on status but on permission, and therefore not, properly speaking, a liberty at all. It runs :—

“Whereas it has been made to appear to me by evidence adduced

before me that Pandit Bhoje Dutt, political agitator and Editor of the vernacular paper "Musafir Arya", Agra, has arrived in Calcutta and intends to lecture in the Albert Hall in Calcutta this evening at 8 p.m. on the subject of "Musulman logonke barkhilaf" i.e. against the interests of Mohamedans :—

And whereas I am satisfied that such lecturing or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt at any place or in any building in Calcutta may lead to serious disturbance of the public tranquillity and rioting which will be a source of danger to human life and public safety :—

And whereas I am satisfied that the immediate prevention of such lecturing and preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt within the town of Calcutta is necessary in the interests of human life and safety and in order to prevent any riot or affray, I do hereby under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code order and direct the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt to refrain from delivering any lecture or preaching or holding or taking part in any meeting within the town of Calcutta, and I hereby direct the public generally to refrain from attending or taking part in any lecture or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt and to refrain from attending or taking any part in any meeting or meetings held by or on behalf of the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt in the town of Calcutta and I further direct that this order shall remain in force for a period of two months from the date thereof.

Given under my hand and seal of this Court dated the 25th September 1909".

The value of the evidence which so easily satisfied Mr. Swinhoe may be judged from its inaccuracy and triviality. Pandit Bhoje Dutt is not a political agitator, but a religious preacher and social reformer; the proposed lecture had nothing to do with the Mahomedans and was upon the Hindu Puranas, and there was no breach of peace or any approach to a breach of the peace at Monghyr. So much for the accuracy. Secondly, Mr. Swinhoe ought to have known that, although a lecture may be against the interests of the Mahomedans, "against the interests of the Mahomedans" cannot be the title or subject of a lecture, and we can only suppose that this satisfactory witness was a badly-educated detective or informer who either did not know his own meaning or could not make it clear to Mr. Swinhoe. Nor is it alleged that the preaching in Monghyr resulted in a breach of the

peace, only that it merely so resulted. On such incorrect and flimsy evidence, given *exparte* and without any opportunity to the lecturer to expose its falsity, a magistrate is able and willing to deprive a citizen of his civic rights for two months and hamper a legitimate movement. If, after proper enquiry, the Magistrate had found that there was likely to be anything inflammatory in the lecture, he could have stopped the speaker from giving that or any similar lecture, but, even so, there would be no ground for a prolonged denial of civic rights. Further, it is not enough that a lecture should be against the interests of any community, for there may be such a thing as legitimate opposition of interests; the conversion of Hindus to Mahomedanism is against the interests of Hindus and the conversion of Mahomedans to Hinduism is against the interest of Mahomedans, but neither religion can, on that ground be denied the right of proselytisation. If it be argued that whatever the exercise of legitimate rights may lead to a breach of the peace, that exercise may be stopped, we say that this is a most dangerous principle, since it would be enough for any section of the community to break or threaten to break the peace to stop others from the exercise of their legitimate rights. On such grounds Mr. Asquith should be barred from holding any meeting because the suffragettes climb walls and throw stones wherever he goes ! Such a principle simply means putting a premium upon lawlessness. In other countries the indiscreet use of powers by Magistrates is restrained by public opinion but in India there is no such safeguard.

(Since the above was in type, the Police have undertaken to prove their statements, and the facts stated above must be taken as Pandit Bhoje Dutt's side of the case. Our general criticisms of the policy of the order remain unaffected. The chance now given to the Police to substantiate their case ought to have been given to the Pandit before the order was passed.—Ed.)

THE PATIALA ARRESTS

For sometime past the Native States of Rajputana and Punjab have been vying with each other in promulgations and legislations of a drastic character against sedition and conspiracy. The object of these edicts seems to be to stifle all agitation, all semblance of any

political thought and activity that may be directed against the existing state of things not in the States themselves but in British India. Otherwise, it is impossible to account for the draconian severity of the language and substance of these ukases or the foolish thoroughness of some of the measures adopted, such as the prohibition of entry of even the colourless papers like the *Bengali*. The exponents of Anglo-Indian opinion point triumphantly to these measures both as a proof of aristocratic loyalty to British officialdom and as an index of the civility with which the agitation would be visited if, instead of the misplaced leniency of British bureaucrats, we were exposed to the ruthlessness of an indigenous government. As every Indian knows, these self-gratulations are insincere and meaningless. The majority of Native States are wholly under the thumb of the Resident and, with the exception of one or two independent princes, like the Gaekwar, neither Maharaja nor Council of Administration can call their souls their own. On all this comes the commotion in Patiala. The Patiala conspiracy has yet to be proved to be more real than the Midnapur specimen. But, if all is true that is being asserted in the Punjab press as to the refusal of the most ordinary privileges of defence to the numerous accused and the amazing and successful defiance of High Court orders by Mr. Warburton, the police are not going the best way to convince the public opinion on this point. The facts stated amount to a guess and shameless denial of justice. We do not blame the young Maharaja for his inability to interfere in favour of the oppressed victims of police rule. We know how helpless the princes are in the face of an Anglo-Indian Resident or employee and we wholly discredit the newspaper assertion that these strange proceedings were initiated or are willingly countenanced by him. It was first asserted that—as usual !—the police had full evidence and information in their hands. The present delay and sufferings entailed prove sufficiently that they had nothing of the kind—again, as usual. The arrested Arya Samajists may be innocent or guilty, but the procedure used against them would be tolerated in no country where law and equity were supreme.

(To be continued)

SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO AND THE NEW AGE

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT

WESTERN LITERATURE

FRENCH LITERATURE (*Continued*)

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU (1712-1778)

WE have seen how the French philosophers of the eighteenth century with Voltaire at their head strove to exalt reason to the rank of the supreme guide and judge of human life and do away with religion and all that it meant to them—irrational faith, crude superstitions, outworn conventions, and the blind allegiance of man to dead and senseless dogmas. They laughed to scorn the sacrosanct authority of the Church and dreamed of the social progress and individual freedom and advancement to be achieved by rationalism. They emphasised and inculcated what was already in the air, inspiring all contemporary philosophical and social thinking. They were inheritors of their immediate past, ardent followers of Descartes. But new ideas, new forces were now stirring in human nature, and it was high time their exclusive cult of reason was dislodged from its high throne. For, man is not all reason, all intellect; he has also a heart of feelings and passions; and however much reason may try to snub or suppress it by its arid glare, it throws up its foaming surges and undermines what reason has toiled to build. A natural reaction against the deification of reason set in. The voice of the heart struggled to express itself, and its deeper feelings and beliefs panted to recover the eternal object of their seeking, that without which the triumphant reign of reason seemed barren and vapid. This voice found its mouthpiece in France in Jean-Jacques Rousseau. But Rousseau was a prophet who did not understand the whole import and significance of what heaved in his own breast and boiled in his own blood. He delivered

his message in stinging half-truths, naive paradoxes, and clumsy but eloquent contradictions. Though he took the literary world in France by storm and powerfully struck kindred chords in Germany, Italy and other parts of Europe, his gospel had but a potential success in his time—it bore abundant fruit in the near future, in the French Revolution, in the Romantic movement in literature, in the general recognition of the dignity and rights of the individual, and the enfranchisement of humanity from the fetters of feudalism and luxurious capitalistic aristocracy. As Goethe says, an old world ended with Voltaire, and a new world was born with Rousseau.

Rousseau called man to the simplicity, the naturalness, the unspoilt goodness of the primitive. Return to Nature by breaking out of the meshes of civilisation, he cried. The florid conventions, the gilded artificialities, the sophisticated amenities of civilisation choke the springs of simple sincerity and goodness in man. Civilisation dehumanises and mechanises man and leads him to duplicity, wickedness, and corruption. Shorn of its obvious extravagances, Rousseau's gospel finds an echo in every thinking being, as indeed, it did, later, in Whitman, Emerson, Thoreau, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Tolstoy.

In politics Rousseau fought for the common man and the community. He railed against the unequal possession of property. Property is the source of all social evils, he thundered—it leads to more and more exploitation, injustice, oppression etc. Some of his utterances have become the stock affirmation of socialism and communism. He was also a powerful and eloquent champion of the dignity and rights of the individual, Tyranny must be struck down and the liberty and dignity of man must be restored and safeguarded at all cost. His message contained some of the seminal ideas which govern even modern society and politics. His book, the *Contract Social*, exercised for about two centuries a profounder and more expansive influence than any other book of the eighteenth century. It became the Bible of the French revolutionaries, and a host of thinkers like Schiller and Hegel, Marx and Lenin were impregnated with its political ideas. He preached both individualism and socialism without being able to effect their reconciliation. He dreamed of an absolute State that would administer justice and fairplay and guarantee the freedom of each individual. But such a state has never come into existence,

What has actually come is a monolithic, authoritarian State nourished on the gospel of dialectical materialism in which the individuality of man is ground out of existence.

In education Rousseau's contribution is being more and more recognised as the days pass. The return to the simplicity of Nature, elimination of the treadmill of enormous text-books, training of the senses, development of the faculty of reflection and imagination, appreciation of Nature and a sympathetic response to its changing moods and aspects, and, above all, cultivation of music and the building up of a sound body, are some of the cardinal features of the education to which humanity is slowly awaking.

In religion and ethics his influence had a far-reaching success. He was no believer in institutional Christianity and dogmatic theology, but he was an ardent believer in God and fully realised the elevating power of religion and morals. Kant acknowledged his indebtedness to Rousseau in his conception of the moral life, and the subsequent, though not immediate, literary and philosophical thought of France throbbed and sparkled with something of the mediæval faith. But it was a faith that blossomed in the light of reason and was not tainted by the old theological and superstitious orthodoxies.

To literature Rousseau's gifts were immense and varied. His "La Nouvelle Histoire" and "Confessions" infused the lyrical, romantic spirit, the zest for psychological exploration, and the love of Nature, which creations of the rationalists of his time so woefully lacked.

Herder and Goethe in Germany were influenced by Rousseau's vivid, idealistic, passionate romanticism and his thrilled delight in the beauties of Nature. Introspection, reverie and meditation, and the revelation of the instincts and impulses that prompt human actions gradually came to prevail in poetry, in fiction, and in other literary productions as a result of his impact. Rousseau's multiple contribution to literature, politics and education has not yet been adequately assessed. It is a pity a great prophetic genius was wrecked on the shoals of his own mental confusion and fantasies, and incredible temperamental oddities.

I have devoted a rather disproportionately large space to a survey of French literature, because it seemed to me that French

language and literature, which exerted a great cultural influence practically over the whole of Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, merited it.

I shall now pass in rapid review the contributions of English and German literatures from the Renaissance to the close of the eighteenth century and then take up a survey of the nineteenth.

(To be continued)

RISHABHCHAND

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

(*Charyapada*)

III

She is the common ale-wife, she goes into both the rooms : (1)
She binds the ale tight with thongs of bark. (2)
Oh, fix the Simplicity and bind the ale tight, (3)
So mayst thou be ageless and deathless and carry solid shoulders (4)
The ten doors are marked : (5)
The customer observes it and comes by himself : (6)
The wine has been poured into the 65 jars (7)
Once the customer enters, there is no more exit for him. (8)
There is one jar and there is one thin spout. (9)
Birube says : steady your move. (10)

Notes

(1) The divine soul or consciousness in man embraces both the sphere of consciousness, the higher and the lower.

(2) That central consciousness hoards the delight, keeps it tight bound in the depth of the heart, so that it may not be spilt and spoilt—the material sheath with its teguments and ligaments must be strong and make a resisting armour.

(3) The supreme consciousness is simplicity itself. What can be more simple than Zero (Nirvana)? One who follows, adheres to simplicity is the Simple Man (Sahaja). This simple single consciousness is to be affirmed, firmly established in this material frame, the body—which is to be made fit so that it may hold that delightful consciousness.

(5) The ten sense-instruments (*indriyas*) through which the consciousness passes in and out. They are to be vigilant and stamped with the seal of the supreme consciousness.

(6) The customer is the divine self, the true individual in man,

(7) The complete number of the principles or elements of the human vessel.

(8) Once you have the divine delight and enter into it you can no longer be satisfied with anything else less.

(9) Truth is one and there is only one expression—that of the straight and narrow path.

(10) Drink but do not be drunk—steady and balanced and firm must be the frame that holds and expresses the divine consciousness and delight.

IV

O my mate, press triply and embrace me fast. (1)

The lotus and the thunder shall meet and I shall pass beyond time. (2)

O my mate, without you I cannot live a moment. (3)

I drink from your lips the very sap of the lotus. (4)

What I cast upward, my love, cannot be kept down here below. (5)

Climb towards the jewel centre and enter into the beyond. (6)

The room of the mother-in-law is under lock and key (7)

Cut away the wings, the sun and the moon. (8)

Gundari says I am a heroic reveller (9)

Between the man and the woman the victory banner is uplifted. (10)

(1) Triply—mind, life and body—*bhūr-bhuvar-svar*

(2) Lotus—the Heart Centre—The Divine within;
Thunder—The Crown Centre—The Divine above

(5) The Consciousness—moves upward, it cannot be tied down upon the earth

(6) Jewel Centre—*manipur*, Solar plexus,

(7) Mother-in-law—ordinary consciousness

(8) Sun and Moon—day and night, the cycle of ordinary consciousness

(10) Purusha and Prakriti in right relation means the victory of the Supreme Consciousness.

THE LIFE DIVINE

(BRIEF SUMMARY)

CHAPTER XIX

LIFE

MIND as a final action of Supermind is a creative and not only a perceptive power; in fact, material force itself being only a will in things working darkly as the expression of subconscious Mind, Mind is the immediate creator of the material universe. But the real creator is Supermind; for wherever there is Mind conscious or or subconscious, there must be Supermind regulating from behind the veil its activities and educing from them their truth of inevitable result. Not a mental Intelligence, but Supermind is the creator of the universe.—Mind manifests itself in the form of Force and Life to which we give the name of Life, and Life in Matter is an energy or power in dynamic movement which builds up forms, energies, maintains, disintegrates and recreates; death itself is only a process of life. It is one all-pervading Life or constant movement of dynamic energy which creates all these forms of the material universe and is not destroyed in the destruction of its forms.—The distinction between animal and plant life is unreal and that between the animate and the inanimate unessential. Plant-life has been found to be identical in organisation with animal life and, although the organisation may differ, life is also present in the metal, the earth, the atom. This life-force pervades the universe and is present in every form of it and there is a constant interchange of its energies which creates the symptoms and characteristics of vitality recognised by us; but even where these are suspended, Life is present and only withdraws by a process of dispersion which replaces the process of continual reconstitution of the form. The presence of these symptoms and characteristics is not the essential nor is their absence a sign of the absence of Life-force. Even where we do not detect Life, it exists.—Conscious nervous sensation accompanies life in the animal, but much of the action of

nervous or life energy is subconscious; in the plant, as in many actions of man, the nervous sensation is present but the mentality of the sensation is subconscious. In the very atom there is a subconscious will and desire which must also be present in all atomic aggregates because they are present in the Force which constitutes the atom. That force is Chit-shakti, force of conscious being, variously represented in various forms of life.—Life is an energising of conscious being in substance of Matter, which on one side is constantly supplying the material of physical formation and on the other labouring to release mind and sense from their subconscious sleep in Matter. It is therefore the dynamic link between Mind and Matter. To create form and evolve consciousness out of its imprisonment in form is the sense of the omnipresent Life in the universe.

CHAPTER XX

DEATH, DESIRE AND INCAPACITY

Life is the same whatever its workings and its terms need not be limited to those proper to physical existence. Life is a final operation of divine conscious-force for individualising existence; it is the energy-aspect of Mind when that creates and relates itself to form of substance : it has all the universal conscious-force of existence behind it and is not a separate entity or movement. Life in us must become conscious of this divine Force behind it in order to become divine.—Life, at first darkened, ignorant, divided and helplessly subject, seeks as it develops to become master and enjoyer, to grow in Power; but until it escapes from the bonds of individuality it must be subject to its three badges of limitation, Death, Desire and Incapacity.—The nature of physical life imposes death because all life exists by a mutual devouring and struggle and Life itself feeds upon the forms it creates; but the fundamental justification of Death is, the necessity of a constant variation of experience in succession of Time, the soul seeking thus to enlarge itself and move towards the realisation of its own infinity.—The process of Death results inevitably from the division of substance; life's attempt to aggrandise its being thus divided and limited translates itself into the hunger that devours. This hunger is

the crude form of Death, and Desire is the necessary lever for self-affirmation; but eventually Desire is to grow out of the law of Hunger into the law of Love.—Desire itself is the result of the limitation of capacity which is the consequence of divided Life working as the energy of ignorant mind, all-force being only possible to all-knowledge. Therefore growth by struggle is the third Law of Life. This strife again has to divinise itself and become the clasp of Love. Until then Death, Desire and Strife are and must be the triple mask of the divine Life-principle in its cosmic self-affirmation.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ASCENT OF LIFE

The development of Life starts from an original status of division, subconscious will and inert subjection to mechanical forces. This is the type of material existence.—The terms of the second status which we recognise as vitality, are death, hunger and conscious desire, sense of limited capacity and struggle for survival and mastery. This is the basis of the Darwinian conception of Life, the struggle for life and the survival of the fittest. But this struggle involves a third status whose preparation is marked by the emergence of the conscious principle of love.—The third status contradicts the others in appearance, but really fulfils them. Life begins with division and aggregation based on the refusal of the atom, the first principle of ego and individuality to accept death and fusion by dissolution. This gives a firm basis for the creation of aggregate forms to be occupied by vital and mental individualities. In the next stage we have the general principle of death and dissolution by which the individual form fuses itself in its elements into other lives. This principle of constant fusion and interchange is the law of Life and extends into vital and mental existence as well as the physical. The two principles of individual persistence and mutual fusion have to be harmonised and this can only be done by the emergence and full development of mind which alone is subtle enough to persist in individual consciousness beyond all fusion and dissolution of forms. Here the union and the harmony of the persistent individual and the persistent aggregate

life becomes possible.—Love is the power by which the union and harmony are worked out; for love exists by the persistence of the individual and his conscious acceptance of the necessity and desire of interchange and self-giving. Its growth means the emergence of Mind imposing its law on the material existence, for Mind does not need to devour in order to possess and grow; it increases by giving and confirms itself by fusion with others.—Subconscious will in the atom becomes hunger and conscious desire in the vital being. Love is the transfiguration of desire, a desire of possessing others but also of self-giving; at first subject to hunger and the desire of possession it reveals its own true law by an equal or greater joy in self-giving.—The inert subjection of the will in the atom to the not-self becomes in the vital being the sense of limited capacity and the struggle for possession and mastery. In the third status the not-self is recognised as a greater self and subjection to its law and need freely accepted; at the same time the individual by making the aggregate life and all it has to give his own, fulfils his impulse of possession. This is the Mind's reconciliation of the two conflicting principles which we find at the root of all existence.—But the true and perfect reconciliation can only come by passing beyond Mind and founding all the operations of life on the essential freedom and unity of the spirit.

SRI AUROBINDO

(From the Arya)

THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

III. THE WAKING STATE AND THE 'WHY' OF SAMADHI-PLUNGE

Above us dwells a superconscient god
Hidden in the mystery of his own light :
Around us is a vast of ignorance
Lit by the uncertain ray of the human mind,
Below us sleeps the Inconscient dark and mute.
(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II)

Since mind-consciousness is the sole waking state possessed by mental being,...it cannot ordinarily quite enter into another without leaving behind completely both all our waking existence and all our inward mind. This is the necessity of the Yogic trance.

(Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 452)

To enter into Samadhi is to pass into a state of which no conscious memory remains on awakening.

....When people speak of samadhi, I tell them, "Well, try to develop your inner individuality and you can enter into these very regions in full consciousness, with the delight of communion with the highest regions without losing consciousness for that and returning with a zero instead of an experience."

(The Mother, *Bulletin*, Vol. XIV No. 3, pp. 43-45)

Yes, they (all the states of higher realisation) can be attained even in full activity. Trance is not essential.

(Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, p. 715)

A THOROUGHGOING psychological self-investigation far transcending its present artificial bounds, an occult-spiritual exploration of the total field of our being, reveals the truth that what we normally know of ourselves is not all we are : it is no more than

‘a bubble on the ocean of our existence.’ Indeed, apart from the very insignificant and restricted part of our waking individual consciousness, we are normally perfectly ignorant of the whole of the rest of our being, ‘the immense more’, that lies hidden in apparently inaccessible “reaches of being which descend into the profoundest depths of the subconscious and rise to highest peaks of superconscience, or which surround our little field of our waking self with a wide circumconscient existence of which our mind and sense catch only a few indications.”¹

As a matter of fact, following the ancient Wisdom of the Upanishads,² we can broadly divide the totality of our existence into four provinces or states : the ‘waking state’ or *jāgrat*, the subliminal or the ‘dream-state’ (*svapna*), the superconscient or the ‘sleep-state’ (*susupti*) and finally the state beyond or the ‘ultimate state’ (*turiya*). Corresponding to these four states of our existence, we have in us four selves or rather the four-fold status of the one self that is Brahman : the waking self or *Vaiśvānara*, the Waker; the dream-self or *Taijasa*, the Dreamer; the sleep-self or *Prājña*, the Sleeper; and finally the supreme or absolute self of being, the Fourth (*caturtha*), the Incommunicable (*avyavahārya*), the One without second (*advaita*), of which the three before are derivations.

In less abstruse and mystical terms, we may state that the four-fold scale of being delineated above represents, so to say, the ‘degrees of the ladder of being’ that an embodied soul must successively attain if he would seek to climb back from his phenomenal and ignorant self-view towards the supreme superconscience of the highest state of his self-being. But what are the essential traits of these four statuses ?

The Waking State: Our waking consciousness, the consciousness that we normally possess and that is dominated by the physical mind, is a limping surface consciousness shut up in the body limitation and within the confines of the little bit of personal mind. We are ordinarily aware only of our surface selves and quite ignorant of all that functions behind the veil. And yet “what is on the surface, what we know or think we know of ourselves and even believe that that is all we are,

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 592.

Vide, in particular, *Mandukya Upanishad* and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

is only a small part of our being”¹, and by far the larger part lies hidden “behind the frontal consciousness, behind the veil, occult and known only by an occult knowledge.”²

While in this normal waking consciousness, a man becomes externalised and gazes outward and rarely if ever inward (*param paśyati nāntarātman*).³ Hence the self in this status of external wakefulness has been described as ‘wise of the outward’ (*jāgaritasthāno bahiḥ-prajñah*).⁴ No spiritual life or any higher or deeper realisation becomes possible if one remains fettered to this waking state.

The Dream-State : This represents the subliminal condition of our conscious existence, the large luminous realm of interior consciousness, that corresponds to the subtler life-plane, the mind-plane and even a subtle physical plane of our being. Indeed, behind our outer existence, our outer mind and life and body,

Our larger being sits behind cryptic walls :
There are greatnesses hidden in our unseen parts
That wait their hour to step into life’s front :

....

Our inner Mind dwells in a larger light,
Its brightness looks at us through hidden doors;

....

A mighty life-self with its inner powers
Supports the dwarfish modicum we call life;

....

Our body’s subtle self is throned within
In its viewless palace of veridical dreams.⁵

Thus, the subliminal reach of our being comprises our inner existence, that is to say, our inner mind, inner life and inner physical with the soul or psychic entity supporting them all. It is of the nature of a secret intraconscient and circumconscient awareness in full possession of a brilliant mind power, a limpid life-force and an unclouded subtle-physical sense of things.

¹ & ² *On Yoga II*, p. 353.

³ *Katha Upanishad*, II.1.1.

⁴ *Mandukya Upanishad*, 3.

⁵ *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II, p. 128.

It is in this subliminal realm of our interior existence, the realm of subtle subjective supraphysical experiences and of dreams and visions and heavenly intimations, a veritable world of wonderful illuminations, that our mind and vital being retire when they withdraw by inward-drawn concentration from their absorption in surface activities.

It is because of its inward plunge bringing in its train a wealth of inner experiences, dreams and visions, that the self in this status has been termed the 'dream-self that is wise of the inward' (*Svapna-sthāno'ntahprajñah*).¹

The Sleep-State : This corresponds to a still higher super-conscious status, a state of pure consciousness (*prajñānaghana*)², pure bliss (*ānandamaya hyānandabhuk*)³ and pure mastery (*sarveśvara*)⁴. This exalted state of self-absorbed consciousness is called 'sleep' because all mental or sensory experiences cease when we enter this superconscience. This 'dreamless sleep state' (*yata supto...na kañcana svapnam paśyati*)⁵ this status of massed consciousness and omnipotent Intelligence (*sarveśvara sarvajña*)⁶, contains in it "all the powers of being but all compressed within itself and concentrated solely on itself and, when active, then active in a consciousness where all is the self."⁷ It is in this superconscious 'sleep-state' that we become "inherently and intrinsically conscious of our self and spirit, not as here below by a reflection in silent mind or by acquisition of the knowledge of a hidden Being within us; it is through it, through that ether of superconscience, that we can pass to a supreme status, knowledge, experience."⁸

The Turiya State : This corresponds to the highest status far transcending the first three, being the status of pure self-existence and absolute being, where consciousness and unconsciousness as we actually conceive of both lose their validity. It is the supreme state of Sachchidananda, 'a state of superconscience absorbed in its self-existence, in a self-silence or a self-ecstasy.'

¹ *Mandukya Upanishad*, 4.

^{2,3,5} *Ibid.*, 5.

^{4,6} *Ibid.*, 6.

⁷ *The Life Divine*, p. 405 f.n.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 501.

About the self of this fourth or the Turiya state, the Mandukya Upanishad speaks :

“He who is neither inward-wise, nor outward-wise, nor both inward and outward wise, nor wisdom self-gathered, nor possessed of wisdom, nor unpossessed of wisdom, He who is unseen and incommunicable, unseizable, featureless, unthinkable, and unnameable, Whose essentiality is awareness of the Self in its single existence, in Whom all phenomena dissolve, Who is Calm, Who is Good, Who is is One than Whom there is no other, Him they deem the fourth : He is the Self, He is the object of Knowledge.”¹

Such is then the fourfold divisions of the totality of our existence, and true knowledge, that is to say, spiritual knowledge about our self-being as well as about the world-being becomes available to us only when we succeed in establishing a conscious rapport with the subliminal and the now superconscious realms of our being. But unfortunately our waking state is blissfully ignorant of its connection with or even the very existence of these supernal reaches. So the goal of Yoga which is essentially an attempt at arriving at an integral self-knowledge, an entire consciousness and power of being and a supreme union or unity with Sachchidananda, the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, can be attained only by a progressive ascension of the mind to higher and still higher planes or degrees of consciousness.

But here a serious and seemingly insuperable hitch presents itself. For mind is the sole waking consciousness actually possessed by man the mental being and this mind in its actuality completely fails to remain awake, beyond a certain line, in the really higher states of realisation where the heightened and intensified spiritual experiences are in the nature of thing sought. This almost absolute incompatibility of our waking mentality with the highest ranges of spiritual consciousness is strikingly brought out in the following very interesting account of Sri Ramakrishna's repeated failures to remain physically awake on the summits of realisation. Swami Saradananda, one of the closest direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and the writer of his authoritative biography, is reporting :

“In how simple terms the Thakur (i.e. Sri Ramakrishna) used to explain to us these abstruse truths of spiritual life :

“ ‘Well, something rises from my feet and climbs towards the head. So long as it does not reach the head, I retain consciousness; but as soon as it reaches there, an *utter forgetfulness* overtakes me—then there is no more seeing or hearing, far be it to speak of talking.’ Who would speak then ?—The very sense of ‘I’ and ‘Thou’ vanishes altogether ! I often decide to speak everything to you, all about the visions and experiences that accompany this ascension. So long as that has reached so far (pointing to his heart) or even so far (pointing to his throat), reporting is possible and in fact I report; but as soon as that transcends this region (pointing to his throat), it seems *somebody shuts my mouth* and I fail to control my foregetfulness ! (Pointing to his throat) when one ascends still further than this level, no sooner than I contemplate for a moment to speak of the visions and experiences there, the mind immediately shoots upwards and *no reporting becomes any more possible !*”

“Oh, innumerable are the occasions when the Thakur sought to exercise the utmost control over himself so that he could report to us about the types of experiences that one has when the mind transcends the throat-centre but each time he failed !... One day he emphatically stated :

“ ‘Today I must speak to you everything, not a bit would I hide’—and he started to speak. He could very well speak all about the centres upto the heart and the throat, and then pointing to the junction of his eye-brows he said, ‘Whenever the mind ascends here, the embodied soul has a vision of the supreme Self and goes into Samadhi. Then there exists but a thin transparent veil between the individual Self and the Supreme. And there the soul experiences in this way—’ Speaking so far, as soon as he started detailing the realisation of the Supreme, he went into the Samadhi state. After coming out of his trance state, he recommenced reporting again, but again went into Samadhi. After such *repeated attempts and failures* he spoke to us with tears in his eyes :

“ ‘My sons, my intention is to report to you everything without hiding the least bit of it : but the Mother won’t allow me to speak—She completely shut my mouth!’”

“We wondered at this and thought : ‘How strange ! It is apparent that he is trying to report and that he is even suffering because of his failure to do so, but he seems to be altogether helpless in this matter—Surely the Mother must have been very naughty indeed ! He wants to speak about holy things, about the vision of God, and it is surely odd that She should shut his mouth !’

“We did not know at that time that the mind’s range is indeed very much limited and that, unless one proceeds farther than its farthest reach, one cannot expect to have the realisation of the Supreme ! In our innocence we could not understand at that time that out of sheer love for us the Thakur was attempting the impossible !”¹

Sri Ramakrishna himself, in his inimitable style, emphasised on more than one occasion this fact of the inability of our mind-consciousness to retain its ‘power of conscious discernment and defining experience’ when it rises to the superconscious heights. He said :

“What happens when the mind reaches the seventh plane (and goes into Samadhi) cannot be described. Once a boat enters the ‘black waters’ of the ocean, it does not return. Nobody knows what happens to the boat after that. Therefore the boat (i.e. Mind) cannot give us any information about the ocean.

“Once a salt doll went to measure the depth of the ocean. No sooner did it enter the water than it melted. Now, who would tell how deep the ocean was ?”²

So it is seen that in the actual state of our evolved waking existence the ascension and entry into the higher realms of our being becomes at all possible *only by receding farther and farther from the waking mentality*, by withdrawing from and losing touch with the dynamic surface life and taking a plunge into the immobile or ecstatic trance of absorbed superconscience. And herein lies for the spiritual seeker the necessity or even the inevitability of the Yogic trance state, so much so that it is emphatically asserted that Samadhi is “not only a supreme means of arriving at the highest consciousness,

¹ Swami Saradananda, Sri Ramakrishna Lila-Prasanga (Gurubhava, Purvardha), pp. 64-66.

² *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 101.

but...the very condition and status of that highest consciousness itself, in which alone it can be completely possessed and enjoyed while we are in the body.”¹

But in that case our goal of dynamic divinisation of life becomes foredoomed to failure. So we must now see whether the trance can be progressively transformed into a waking Samadhi and its spiritual gains made manifest and active even in our waking existence.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 601.

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

CHAPTER XV

THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY

IF there is any religion, any cult or creed which is followed today with unfeigned interest, it is humanism or the religion or cult of humanity. It is believed that there is no better self-fulfilment than in the service of humanity, no more fruitful sacrifice than the sacrifice for the good of one's fellow-men, and no greater test of selflessness than philanthropic or humanitarian pursuit. "I must devote my life and all I possess to doing whatever I can to improve the lot of my fellow beings", says the modern humanist of the noblest type, "and try my best to bring a glint of light into the darkness of ignorant minds, raise a ripple of joyous laughter in despondent faces, and kindle a spark of hope in hearts that are sad and heavy-laden. What better use can there be of my life ?" Such is the thought and such the feeling that inspire those who are considered today the salt of the earth. Service of humanity is thus fully justified in the eyes of those who undertake it and glorified and extolled by those who benefit by it. It appears to be the best means of surpassing one's egoistic self and entering into the stream of universal life.

In fact, doing good to man has always been an important tenet of all world religions and an ideal of all ethical culture. From almsgiving and feeding the starving, to healing the sick, helping the needy, protecting the weak, and instructing the ignorant, all manner of philanthropic work has always engaged the mind and energies of religious and ethical people. Today when religion is under a cloud and even ethics scouted as a relic of cramping tradition, humanism is considered in a scientific spirit, as an important component of modern culture, and a practice of it indispensable to the fulness of a sophisticated life. Though the welfare of humanity has come to be equated with its physical well-being, its deeper ingredients have not been altogether forgotten. There is a steadily growing awareness of an integrated perfection of man and a drive towards its

realisation by corporate effort. Perfection, unity, peace are among the principal objects of modern human endeavour at its best, and he must be a cynic who cries it down as a vain or transitory flourish of an unrealistic idealism. Indeed, since the Renaissance in the West, humanism has sought to claim the allegiance of all progressive minds. "The greatest good of the greatest number" has been the watchword of modern civilisation. The meaning the Renaissance attached to the word humanism has undergone such a change that, except in the "humanities" of university education, it retains nothing of its primal connotation. Particularly, since the eighteenth century, there have been propounded various ideals of humanitarian work, and many institutions have been founded to mobilise the philanthropic ideas, energies and material resources of men, so that human life may be better, healthier, saner, and more harmoniously happy and prosperous. The Unesco with its many-branching activities has established itself as a salutary force for human development and well-being.

It may be contended that much of this work is being crossed and perverted by political motives, and that what little is achieved is neutralised by other cognate factors. But even taking all this drawback into account, it would be uncharitable to deny the light and force of the ideal which is spreading into all layers of modern culture. There is no civilised country in the world today in which there is not some institution or some group of men coordinating all individual initiatives in the direction of humanitarian work, and exerting a moral pressure upon the human mind to emerge out of its selfish grooves and bear a hand in improving the general lot of mankind. The idea itself has a powerful appeal, and the thought has become almost inescapable. And, granting the force and appeal of the idea which has undoubtedly possessed itself of the modern mind, its fulfilment can only be a matter of time.

It may be contented again that the warm feeling which inspired the service of man in the past when it sprang from a consciousness of duty is lacking today. One who helped others or ministered to their well-being, in whatever modest way it might be, felt gratified at having had the opportunity and the means to

do it. It was considered a religious obligation, an act of sacrament, a sacred duty, which one could disregard only to the detriment of one's spiritual progress. The sympathy, the sense of sharing which prompted the service of one's fellow men benefited the giver more than the receiver. But modern service is something mechanised, institutionalised, and coldly impersonal. The charge is not altogether unfounded, but it is too sweeping in its generalisation to be wholly true. Even today in what are rather arrogantly called developing countries—as if the prosperous nations had gone beyond all development—one comes across instances of social, national or humanitarian service which glow with genuine feelings of sympathy. But still it must be conceded that much of such service has become more or less mechanical and matter-of-fact, and hardly evokes any immediate deep feeling in the givers. In many cases, it cannot be denied, it has been rendered a powerful means of parading one's power and riches, and a sort of self-advertisement. Sympathy, compassion, kindness and generosity have not yet disappeared from the world, and their utility can never perhaps be over. But what has certainly to be guarded against is the mechanisation of generous impulses and the freezing of human feelings. If men become automations, their humanitarian service cannot but be reduced to a mechanised system, a drab routine work. And modern scientism is driving fast towards it.

However, admitting the great value of service to humanity, one may yet ask : “Is this the height of human endeavour ? Does it really contribute to human happiness ? Is it a means of effacing the ego, and its selfish motives ? Can it be done in a truly selfless spirit ? What is human welfare ? What is real happiness ? Are the persons who engage in such activities really happy ? Have they discovered the secret of making themselves and others happy ? What are the causes of human misery and how can they be eliminated ? What is the hidden motive behind this service, even at its best ? These are some of the questions we propose to consider next.

(To be continued)

LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION*

A MASSIVE Report of the Education Commission has recently been submitted to the Government of India. Much had been expected of this Commission, and its Report has been hailed in many quarters as revolutionary. Indeed, the Commission itself has underlined the need for a drastic reform, almost a revolution in education. However, when one reads its recommendations one feels a sense of disappointment in the fact that it has missed the soul of education. It seems as though most of the attention has been paid to the external aspects of the educational system. Undoubtedly, the external aspects are important, and indeed the soul of education does need a fully developed body and organisation for its full effectivity, still, the external by itself cannot be properly and fully organised without the central recognition of the soul of education.

Undoubtedly, again, the Commission has declared explicitly that education is not a mere process of imparting information, that it has something to do with the whole personality of the student, that education has to be purposive, goal-seeking, that there should be a close link between education and life, that educational system must put forth ideals before the entire educational community. Not only that, the Commission has gone farther and underscored the point that the national system of education must be rooted in the basic values and the cherished traditions of the Indian nation and suited to the needs and aspirations of a modern society. It should, in other words, be science based while fully incorporating the highest Indian values. It has devoted a full chapter to the ideals of education system and has strongly recommended that all students should receive, among other things, an education in moral and spiritual values.

And yet we feel that this is not enough, in fact, hardly anything. For, when we try to be precise, we are greeted by some

* Based on a talk given by the writer on 13-8-1966 at Calcutta on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Sri Aurobindo Pathamandir, Calcutta.

world tends to be one, and the impact of the civilisations upon each other is unprecedented. It calls for an integration of psychological tendencies and capacities, even of an ordinary man. It is this call for a breakdown of all barriers that causes the crisis. It can be met only by a revolutionary or evolutionary progression, towards a new type of humanity. The ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity can be fulfilled not in the man as he is, but in the man of the Future, the man that has transcended his present psychological limitations.

(7) This research in the Ashram is not merely theoretical, but it is concretely practical. Here in the Ashram, people of the East and of the West have come together, and are deliberately put together to see and work out all the problems that a universal or international civilisation might bring forth.

(8) The result has been a growing research in the various ways of life and their psychological, vital, and physical expressions, and in the various crystallised forms of art and literature. Various attempts are being made to create synthetic forms of Indian and Western Dance, new, creative and synthetic Music, forms of Art which take their inspiration from the East and the West and from the planes of synthetic consciousness which lie high above the ordinary human mind. New forms of Literature shape themselves, and through drama, stories, essays and poetry or through various other literary means, they find their suitable vehicles and grow in an international and synthetic atmosphere of the Ashram.

A special mention must be made of Poetry, since Sri Aurobindo, Himself a poet, has given to the English Literature its longest epic, *Savitri*. Sri Aurobindo made several experiments in what might be termed as *The Future Poetry*. And some of the conclusions in this field are contained in His book, *The Future Poetry*. Several members of the Ashram have attempted to make their own experiments in the light of the idea of the future poetry, and some of these experiments have proved a success.

Even in the field of physical culture, there is the same synthetic character. No aspect of physical culture is left untouched—Indian system of asana, Japanese Judo, and Western system of gymnastics, athletics, combatives and games—all meet together in the same comprehensive embrace.

It is in the vibrating and dynamic atmosphere created by the constant pursuit of the integral yoga and the integral knowledge that a research is being conducted in an integral system of education. An educational atmosphere conditioning, supporting and permeating the very process of education for the young ones, the Promise of a New Future.

KIREET M. JOSHI

THE LIFE DIVINE

(BRIEF SUMMARY)

CHAPTER XXII

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

LIFE being a divided movement of consciousness although really an undivided force becomes a clash of opposing truths each striving to fulfil itself. Mind has to solve the thousand and one problems resulting but in Life itself, not merely in thought. The difficulty lies in its ignorance of itself and the world. Man knows only the surface of his own being and does not know the universality of the Force of which he is a part; therefore he can master neither himself nor the world. He has to know and solve the problem or else give place to some higher evolutionary being.—The poise of Life is determined by the relation of the Force to the Consciousness which drives it. Accordingly we have, besides the Infinite Existence, first the life of material Nature ruled by the infallible Inconscient; secondly the life of conscious being in material Nature emerging out of the Inconscient, fallible, bewildered, only half-potent, which is our own; and thirdly the life of the real Man to which we are moving where Consciousness and Force are fulfilled and in harmony and the One at unison with the many. That life will be founded on the awareness of one Consciousness in many minds, one Force working in many lives, one Delight of being in many hearts and bodies.—Man's difficulties: first, he only knows and governs a part of himself, the greater part of himself is subconscious and it is this greater cosmic part that really governs his surface being. This is what is meant by his being governed by his Nature and by the Lord seated within through the Maya or apparent denial of Sachchidananda by Himself. It is only by becoming one with the Lord that man can be master of himself, but this union must be in the Divine Maya, in the super-conscious and not only or chiefly in this lower Maya of the mental existence.—Secondly, he is separated by his individuality from the

universal and does not know his fellow-beings. He must be not only in sympathy with them, but arrive at a conscious unity with all and this conscious unity exists only in what is now superconscient to us.—Thirdly, Life is at war with body; Mind at war with the life and the body, each trying to subject the others to his own law. Only the supramental can find the law of immortal harmony which shall reconcile this discord of our mortality. Each of these principles has besides a soul in it which seeks a self-fulfilment beyond what the present force of life, mind or body can give. There is a conflict between opposing instincts of the body, opposing desires and impulses of the life, opposing ideas of the mind. The principle of unity is above in the supermind.—Man as he develops becomes acutely aware of all these discords and seeks a reconciliation with himself and with his fellow-beings. This can only come by the perfection of his own existence through the principle in himself to which he has not yet attained and by embracing consciously the life of others in his own through an universal consciousness which must also be gained by the superconscient becoming conscient in us through an upward evolution.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DOUBLE SOUL IN MAN

The ascent of Life is in its nature the ascent of the divine Delight in things from its dumb concentration in Matter to its luminous consummation in Spirit. Like the other original divine principles, this Delight also must be represented in us by a cosmic principle corresponding to it in the apparent existence. It is the soul or psychic being.—As there is a subliminal luminous mind behind our surface mind, a subliminal life behind our mental life, a subliminal wider corporeality behind our gross body, so we have a double soul, the superficial desire-soul and the true psychic entity.—The superficial in us is the small and egoistic, the subliminal is in touch with the universal. So our subliminal or true psychic being is open to the universal delight of things, the superficial desire-soul is shut off from it. It feels the outward touches of things, not their essence

and therefore not their Rasa or true touch ; and because it cannot reach the universal world-soul, it cannot find its own true soul which is one with the world-soul.—The desire-soul returns the triple responses of pleasure, pain and indifference, but the psychic being behind it has the equal delight of all its experiences; it compels the desire-soul to more and more experience and to a change of its values. By bringing this soul to the surface we can overcome the duality of pleasure and pain, as is actually done in certain directions of experience by the artist, Nature-lover, God-lover, etc. each in his own fashion. But the difficulty is to do it in the desire-soul at its centre where it comes into contact with practical living ; for here the human mind shrinks from the application of the principle of equality.—To bring this subliminal soul to the surface is not enough ; for it is open passively to the world-soul but cannot possess the world. Those who thus arrive, become close to the universal delight, but not masters of life. For there are two principles of order and mastery, one false, the ego-sense, the other true, the Lord who is one in the many. By merely suppressing the ego-sense in the impersonal delight we gain the centreless Impersonal and are fulfilled in our static being but not in our active being. We must therefore gain the other centre in the Supermind by which we shall consciously possess and not merely undergo the delight of the One in His universal existence.

SRI AUROBINDO

THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Continuation)

IV. WHAT IS SAMADHI OR YOGIC TRANCE]?

In her own depths she heard the unuttered thought
That made unreal the world and all life meant.
“Who art thou who claim’st thy crown or separate birth,
The illusion of thy soul’s reality
And personal godhead on an ignorant globe
In the animal body of imperfect man ?
...Only the blank Eternal can be true.
All else is shadow and flash in Mind’s bright glass,

...
O soul, inventor of man’s thoughts and hopes,
Thyself the invention of the moments’ stream,
Illusion’s centre or subtle apex point,
At last know thyself, from vain existence cease.”

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, BK. VII C. VI, pp.607-608)

BEYOND the realm of thought, transcending the domain of duality, leaving Maya with all her changes and modifications far behind,...shines the glory of the Eternal Brahman in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Knowledge, knower and known dissolve in the menstrium of One Eternal Consciousness ; birth, growth and death vanish in that infinite Existence ; and love, lover and beloved merge in that unbounded ocean of Supreme Felicity....Breaking down the ridge-poles of that tabernacle in which the soul has made its abode for untold ages—stilling the body, calming the mind and drowning the ego, comes the sweet joy of Brahman in that superconscious state. Space disappears in nothingness, time is swallowed up in Eternity...[and] it is all stillness indefinable....The Nirvikalpa Samadhi is the highest flight of Advaita Philosophy.

(*Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, Advaita Ashram, Almora, p.181)

The acquisition of the highest spiritual consciousness, at least statically if not dynamically, is the goal of all spiritual endeavour. But, as we have noted before, the spiritual reaches of consciousness lie far behind and above our normal waking mentality. Now the question is : is it possible to possess the spiritual consciousness while still remaining embedded in the ordinary mental functions? In other words, can the normal unregenerate surface consciousness and the spiritual one be concomitant and simultaneously operative ? Seekers in all ages and climes, who have the necessary credentials to pronounce on this point, are universally agreed to deny this possibility.

So, broadly speaking, four alternatives may open out before those who aspire after spirituality :

(a) To create a division, a separation, a dissociation of consciousness and to be spiritual within or above while the outer consciousness and its ignorant movements are indifferently watched and felt to be something intrinsically foreign and disparate. This is the solution of the 'Witness Consciousness'.

(b) To be satisfied with the *indirect* glories of the spiritual consciousness as *reflected* and refracted in the bosom of our normal mentality. This is what has been termed 'spiritual mental realisation'.

(c) To still and withdraw from the mental consciousness and retire to the *supra-mental* reaches. This is what can be called the 'trance-solution.'

(d) To transform the nature of the normal waking consciousness, to divinise it as we would say, by bringing down there the fullest wealth and splendour of the spiritual heights, so that its present opacity and refractoriness may be altogether rectified. This is the solution of 'divine transfiguration' as envisaged by our Yoga.

Evidently the 'Witness Consciousness' and 'spiritual-mental realisation' fall far short of our goal ; for, be it once again stated, this goal is no less than the establishment of the Life Divine upon earth, a dynamic waking existence embodying Sachchidananda in his fully manifested glories.

But since the yogic trance or Samadhi is so often held up not only as a supreme means of access to the higher possible spiritual

consciousness but “as the very condition and status of that highest consciousness itself, in which alone it can be completely possessed and enjoyed while we are in the body,”¹ We must digress here for a while to examine the nature of Samadhi and find out its utility or otherwise in the pursuit of the Integral Yoga.

Samadhi or Yogic Trance : Since mind-consciousness is normally found to be incompatible with the highest state of spiritual realisation, a veritable yoga or union must almost by definition connote the cessation of all mental functions (*Yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*²) or even of the mind itself (*manonāśo mahodaya*³).

Now, to follow the terminology as used by Vyasa, the great commentator on the ‘Yoga Aphorisms’ of Patanjali, our mind-stuff may function in five different levels or conditions (*cittabhūmayah*). These, from down upwards or from out inward, are (i) *Kṣipta* or restless, the dissipated condition in which the mind is active and externalised and runs after objects of various sorts ; (ii) *mūḍha* or torpid, the stupefied condition in which the mind under the influence of an excessive *tamas* gravitates downwards and wallows in the obscure depths of ignorance ; (iii) *vikṣipta* or distracted, a condition in which the mind becomes relatively pacified and at times somewhat concentrated but thrown out again outwards because of the distracting movements ; (iv) *ekāgra* or concentrated, a condition dominated by *sattva* in which the mind is able to concentrate for a prolonged stretch of time to the exclusion of all other thoughts, upon some particular chosen object or subject of concentration ; and lastly (v) *niruddha* or stilled, a condition in which even the act or function of contemplation ceases and, all modifications of the mind being stopped, nothing whatsoever is known or conceived by the latter.

It goes without saying that the first three conditions of the mind enumerated above are not at all conducive to the practice of spirituality (*Yogapakṣe na vartate*) ; it is only the last two that make possible any spiritual illumination. As a matter of fact, in the parlance of the Patanjali System, “*ekāgra* or the state of concentration,

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 601.

² *Patanjala Sutra*, 1.2.

³ *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*, IV.35.18.

when permanently established is called *samprajñāta Yoga* or the *trance of meditation*, in which there is a clear and distinct consciousness of the object of contemplation. It is known also as *samāpatti* or *samprajñāta samādhi* in as much as *citta* or the mind is, in this state, entirely put into the object and assumes the form of the object itself. So also the state of *niruddha* is called *asamprajñāta yoga* or *asamprajñāta samādhi*,...because this is the *trance of absorption* in which all psychoses and appearances of objects are stopped....¹

In more general terms we may say that *samādhi* or yogic trance is that state of superconsciousness in which the aspirant, diving deep or soaring high in the search of the soul or the self, enters, when his consciousness, through an inward concentration, withdraws from the surface world as perceived by the senses and retires to progressively deeper interior realms of supersensuous experiences. In this process of inward withdrawal or upward ascension, the consciousness first enters the 'dream-state' and then proceeds to the 'sleep-state'. While in the dream-state, the outer mind of the *sadhaka* becomes quiescent and his inner mind, separated from the outer and no longer covered up by it, ranges through a wonderful world of rich and variegated inner experiences.

To obviate any possible misunderstanding that the nomenclature 'dream-state' or 'sleep-state' may engender in an unwary spirit, we may forthwith state here that the yogic dream- or sleep-states have nothing to do with the physical states of dream and sleep. "In the Yogic dream-state...the mind is in clear possession of itself, though not of the physical world, works coherently,...[Is perfectly] awake...not with the out-going, but with an ingathered wakefulness in which, though immersed in itself, it exercises all its powers."²

In the dream-state itself there is an infinite series of depths, starting with that for which the world of physical senses is almost at the doors though momentarily shut out, and reaching to depths not likely to be broken in upon by the impact or call of the sensuous physical world. As a matter of fact, "beyond a certain point the trance becomes complete and it is then almost quite impossible to

¹ Chatterjee and Dutta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, p.305.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp.594-95.

awaken or call back the soul that has receded into them ; it can only come back by its own will or at most by a violent shock of physical appeal dangerous to the system owing to the abrupt upheaval of return.”¹

With the increasing depths or heights of the degrees of consciousness attained by the soul, the experiences obtained become progressively remote and less and less communicable to the waking mind, until the trance becomes complete in an utter self-gathering of the being when the central consciousness separates from the last vestige of mentality. Then it becomes an absolute impossibility for any records or transcripts of the experiences therein to reach the portals of the normal waking consciousness. This is the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi claimed to be the highest status of spiritual attainment and assiduously sought after by every seeker after trance.

In this ultimate trance-state of pure superconscient existence, in this *supra*-mental immersion in the infinite being and the unconditioned bliss, time and space and hence the world of names and forms vanish into nothing, all action of mental awareness whether of outward or of inward things is altogether abolished and everything is drawn up into the supercosmic Beyond.

Once attaining this supreme state of Nirvikalpa trance, the soul finds it difficult, well-nigh impossible, to return again to the active life-consciousness, for “it loses the hold on the cord which binds it to the consciousness of life, and the body is left, maintained indeed in its set position, not dead by dissolution, but incapable of recovering the ensouled life which had inhabited it.”²

We have so far analysed in abstract terms the physiognomy of the Yogic trance. To complete the account we would now like to reproduce in brief the concrete cases of the sage Uddalaka and Ramakrishna to show how in fact the consciousness withdrawing inward passes through progressively deepening states of being to repose finally in the absolute state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

First the scriptural account of the trance of Uddalaka as depicted

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 593.

² *Ibid.*, p. 593.

in the great work *Yoga-Vasishtha Maharamayana* :¹

The trance of Uddalaka : "One day the sage deliberated : 'When will you attain to eternal peace by reaching the status of mindlessness, for such is indeed the condition for getting freed from the bondage of repeated births ?'... Then the Brahmin Uddalaka sat down to concentrate and withdraw his mind. But he could not succeed at once in attaining the samadhi state, for his mind, in the fashion of a restless baboon, began to fleet from object to object.... At a later stage, the mind-monkey would at times leave outside contacts and felt eager for the enjoyment of the inner sattvic bliss; but this was indeed an intermittent mood, for most often the mind would rush towards outward objects again, as if it was stung by a venomous snake. At times, his inner state was being cleared of the obscurity of ignorance and Uddalaka visioned the glory of a sun; but in no time his Chitta became restless again and flew outward in the manner of a startled bird. Again, he withdrew inward and experienced at times a vacant space or the Zero of an impenetrable darkness....As a warrior in battle kills his enemies with a sword, Uddalaka started destroying one by one all the *vikalpas* that were appearing in his consciousness. The *vikalpas* gone, he saw in the inner space a green-black Sun but proceeded immediately to eradicate this inky darkness. Then the softness of a massed lustre greeted the sage Uddalaka. But that too he eliminated in no time following the way of an elephant calf that gets into a lotus-pond and tears away and devastates the lotuses all around. Once this massed splendour was gone, Uddalaka's mind succumbed to a spell of deep sleep just as a man highly intoxicated loses his sobriety and then gets into torpor; but the sage was prompt enough to annul this state of sleep. Then his mind was filled with the consciousness of *Vyoma*; but just as the wind sweeps away the dew-drops, he too swept away from his mind this clear and stainless consciousness of *vyoma*. But, following that, some sort of dazed dullness overtook him as if he was a heavily drunk man who had just come out of his torpid state. Even this too he vanquished.

"Then, at long last, the sage Uddalaka reached the status of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, where there was neither any obscurity nor any

¹ Vide *Yoga-Vasishtha, Upashama Prakarana*), sargas 51-54.

ephemeral lustre.”¹

That, in the state of Nirvikalpa trance, the body becomes immobile like a painted image (*citrārpita ivācalah*²) and even a violent sense-appeal fails to bring back the soul to the waking consciousness has been equally forcefully brought out by the Yoga-Vasishtha in the following account of the Samadhi of Shikhidhvaja :

“The queen Chudala went to the forest and found there the king Shikhidhvaja seated, like a sculptured tree, in the state of Nirvikalpa trance. She deliberated : ‘I must now seek to re-awaken the king, otherwise he will leave his body very soon.’ Then the queen Chudala approached the king’s body and shouted at the top of her voice. This loud sound and then the sound of the trumpet frightened and startled the sylvan creatures, but the queen’s repeated attempts failed to evoke any response from the king whose body remained tranced and immobile like a granite mass.³ Chudala then laid her hands on the body of Shikhidhvaja and started violently agitating it. Thus shaken, the king’s body fell down and rolled on the ground, but even then did not recover his waking consciousness. Then the queen wondered and thought, ‘It does not seem to be an easy proposition to awaken my King ! Only if he still possesses the grain of a desire somewhere hidden in seed-form, that will help him to come back again to the waking state, in no other wise can he be aroused.’ ”⁴

The Trance-Experience of Sri Ramakrishna : Now we come to the very authentic historical case of the Sage of Dakshinesvara whose trance-experiences as depicted in his authoritative biography published by the Ramakrishna Order itself we reproduce below :

“Sri Ramakrishna’s Samadhi covered a wide range of experiences from his perception of various visions to the annihilation of his mind in the infinite consciousness of Brahman. It had also many forms.... Thus he entered into a ‘world of power’, or ‘a world of beauty’, or

¹ *Yoga-Vasishtha*, IV. 51-54.

² *Ibid.* , IV. 37.2.

³ Cf. Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII C. II, p. 538 :

“...her body became a stark
And rigid golden statue of motionless trance,
A stone of God lit by an amethyst soul.
Around her body’s stillness all grew still.”

⁴ *Yoga-Vasishtha (Nirvana Prakarana)*, 103.

'a world of spiritual grandeur'.... He would commune with invisible beings—forms of the Divinity or Divine Incarnations of the past.

"Such visions however belong to the domain of Personality, which is not the last word in spiritual experiences. So long as a sadhaka is satisfied with this kind of samadhi, his attainments cannot be said to be complete. He has not reached unfathomable depths of the ocean, though undoubtedly he has gone far behind the surface, encountering the forms of life abounding there, but he has not yet ransacked the priceless treasures of the deep, which reveal themselves only to those who have the courage to dive on and on till they have touched bottom.

"So we find Sri Ramakrishna taking up another course of sadhana altogether different from his previous ones."¹

Then, a few pages further on, the biographer gives a vivid description of the first Nirvikalpa Samadhi-state of Sri Ramakrishna :

"Sri Ramakrishna passed into the ineffable glory of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi. In that rapturous ecstasy the senses and mind stopped their functions. The body became motionless as a corpse. The universe rolled away from his vision—even space itself melted away. Everything was reduced to ideas which floated like shadows in the dim background of the mind. Only the faint consciousness of 'I' repeated itself in dull monotony. Presently that too stopped, and what remained was Existence alone. The soul lost itself in the Self, and all idea of duality, of subject and object, was effaced. Limitations were gone, and finite space was one with infinite space. Beyond speech, beyond experience and beyond thought, Sri Ramakrishna had realised the Brahman—had become the Brahman.

"Totapuri (Sri Ramakrishna's Guru or the spiritual preceptor) sat for a long time, silently watching his disciple. Finding him perfectly motionless, he stole out of the room and locked the door lest anybody should intrude without his knowledge. Then he awaited the call from Sri Ramakrishna to open the door. The day passed on, the night came. Another day and still another—*three days passed and there was no call*. Totapuri was astonished and went to see what was wrong.

¹ *Life of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashram, Almora), p. 183.

“He opened the door and entered the room. There sat Sri Ramakrishna *in the very same position in which he had left him*. There was no manifestation of life in the body, but the countenance was calm, serene and radiant. He saw that the disciple was still *dead to the objective world*, his mind absorbed in the Self, without a flicker—absolutely steady !...

“With the utmost care he (Totapuri) determined if the heart was beating, or if there was the slightest trace of respiration. Again and again he touched the disciple’s corpse-like body. There was no sign either of life or of consciousness.... It was undoubtedly a case of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi—the culmination of Advaita practice!

“Totapuri immediately took steps to bring the mind of Sri Ramakrishna down to the world of phenomena.”¹

After Totapuri left Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna decided to withdraw from the world of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’ and live constantly in unity with the Supreme. What followed then is very much revealing from our point of view and worth reproducing in the saint’s own inimitable words :

“I stayed in that ineffable state for six months at a stretch, a state from which an ordinary soul knows no return, his body dropping off like a withered leaf from a tree ! There was no sense of the passage of time, of how the days and the nights went by ! Flies and insects used to get into the mouth and nostrils of my body as if in those of a corpse, but they evoked no response from me. Oftentimes I would ease nature involuntarily without being in the least aware of it ! My body would not have remained viable for long, it would have surely dropped down dead, but for the circumstance of the arrival at this time of a sannyasin with a heavy stick in his hand. He realised my state at the very first glance and felt that if this body could somehow be preserved, much good would be done to the world through its agency. It thus so happened that during meal-times he used to beat my body with the stick and no sooner did he find that a faint glimmer of awareness had come, he would push some morsels of food into the mouth. In this way, on some days, a little bit of food could reach my stomach while on other days even that much failed.

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 190-192.

“Six months rolled by in this wise. Then I heard the Mother’s Voice : ‘Come down a bit and stay in *Bhāva-Samādhi*, do stay in *Bhāva-Samādhi* for the welfare of the world !’ Then a serious disease assailed my bodily frame—blood-dysentry it was ! I then had frequent bouts of griping pains and unbearable cramps and wrenches in the stomach ! After I had suffered from such intense agony for long six months, my consciousness could come down little by little into my body and finally I regained the waking state of ordinary men.”¹

So we have seen what samadhi means and how the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi is eulogised as *the* spiritual status *par excellence*. Now we proceed to show that trance-experiences however lofty or however deep fail to meet the demands of our Yoga, and at the same time indicate how our goal of dynamic divinisation of the waking physical existence can be realised.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ Swami Saradananda, *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lila-Prasanga (Guru-Bhava Purvardha)*, pp. 56-57.

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

WE have posed ourselves certain questions in regard to the service of humanity. The first is : Is it the height of human endeavour ? It is evident that the question does not relate to those who do not care for the height of human endeavour. They had better be left to do what they conceive as worth doing or what pleases their thoughts and fancies. They will spin round their own axis with the complacent belief that what they are doing is really the best for the world. And they are quite welcome to their benevolent belief. It is only those who are fired with a lofty idealism and aspire to dare and achieve the highest in life, to stake their all for the supreme perfection, and scale the summits of human possibilities that take care to ponder what should be their greatest endeavour and what it will lead to. It is they who decide what should be their goal and how each ounce of their energy should be directed to its attainment.

Such persons naturally seek to know whether there is any Reality behind the fleeting appearances of the world. Is there not something infinite, they wonder, sustaining the flicker-dance of the finite forms one sees here, something that abides and endures behind this incessant flux, and is untouched by the breath of time ? Is it all a chance, or a brute, mechanical necessity that has woven this marvellous fabric of life out of dead Matter ? Or, is there a fore-seeing and fore-ordaining Intelligence that has spangled the skies with the suns and stars and the earth with endless varieties of genuses and species, and brings) order out of chaos and light out of darkness ? Is not in man and beyond him an Eye of Wisdom and an all-creative purposeful Will guiding his stumbling steps through a tangle of his own and the world's conflicting forces towards a progressive transcendence of his consciousness and power ? If there is such a Reality, such a living, all-mighty Intelligence, he asks himself, should he not endeavour as best he can to realise It and its Will ? Will not life itself be vain and empty without its discovery ? What other endeavour can

be higher than this ? Is it not this the adventure of all adventures, the sole and supreme discovery beside which all other discoveries pale into insignificance ? It must be admitted that no materialist, no sceptic can have any rational grounds to impugn the perception, the faith, and the will and determination that inspire this great adventure. It is a superscientific adventure, undertaken with all the honest curiosity and true empirical zeal of the scientist. It is the quest of Reality and the endeavour to attune life to its creative rhythms.

Our second question is : Granting that the service of humanity is done in the best spirit, does it always contribute to happiness ? This question hinges upon another of a fundamental character : What is happiness ? We do not propose to go into an elaborate consideration of this question here, but will only touch upon what is sufficient to test the validity of the humanist standpoint. Modern man has hardly left any avenue unexplored to find happiness in the world. He has sought it in economic prosperity and the comforts and amenities it provides. He has tried all sense pleasures, but found them all wanting. What pleases him today palls upon him tomorrow. The question of health is a perpetual care, and illness is not a rare visitation, in spite of the phenomenal advance of the medical science. He has sought it in the arts and literature, in science and philosophy, in games and sports, in diverse recreations and amusements, but in none has he found serene and abiding happiness. He has sought it in the relations of life, in love and affection, in sympathy and kindness, in pity and compassion, in friendship and fellow-feeling, but he has discovered to his chagrin that he has no hold over his feelings—they bubble up and melt away, and the mutual give and take upon which they depend is uncertain and ephemeral. His feelings betray their fickleness, and even when he develops a detached and large-hearted attitude towards the world and learns to expect no requital from it, the happiness he derives from it is a mere ghost of what his being yearns for. Scientific or philosophic pursuit may, it is true, give him a somewhat steady satisfaction, but it is only a mental satisfaction he derives from it—his life parts are left starving in cold indifference or coerced into resentful submission. The legitimate demands of his vital are neglected in the absorption of his mental preoccupation.

Bertrand Russell, a thoroughbred scientist, if there was one, gives the following recipe for happiness. "To find the right road out of this despair, civilised man must enlarge his heart as he has enlarged his mind. He must learn to transcend himself, and in so doing to acquire the freedom of the universe."¹ An admirable recipe, indeed. But how to put it into practice ? He admits that "the immense majority of even the noblest persons' actions have self-regarding motives, nor is this to be regretted, since, if it were otherwise, the human race could not survive."² How, then, one wonders, is man going to transcend himself, if "zest (in action) is difficult without some self-regarding motive" ?³ And if there are self-regarding motives, service of humanity is cankered at its very roots and becomes service of oneself. It can be neither unselfish nor disinterested. Can selfish service minister to the happiness of others ?

Russell thinks that "a man should be able to achieve happiness, provided that his passions and interests are directed outward, not inward." Multiplication of external interests is prescribed by him as a sure means of being happy, and to this end, one must give up all introversion, and "forget his own soul." "The man...whose attention is turned within finds nothing worthy of his notice...." An oracular pronouncement seeking to demolish with a confident panache the highest teachings of the wisest men of the world ! And who are the fortunate persons worthy of happiness ? The scientists, of course, for "all the conditions of happiness are realised in the life of the man of science".⁴ Was Newton a scientist ? Let us see how happy he was. Newton "at the hour of his triumph—the completion of a cosmic theory that was to become the basis of all future science—was a dreadfully unhappy man."⁵ In spite of all his engrossment in scientific work, which generated eccentricities in him, he could not quite inhibit his ambitions and the desires of his vital nature nor the caprices and distempers of his inharmonious mental make-up. "I must withdraw from your acquaintance" he wrote to a friend, "and see neither you nor the rest of my acquaintances any more".⁶ The great German scientist E. H. Haeckel's life affords an instance in which

¹, ² & ³ *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell

⁴ *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell

⁵ & ⁶ *Great Scientists* by Thomas & Thomas

an unscientific passion of his heart was suffered to cloud his scientific happiness. The passion assailed him so suddenly and violently when he was sixty-five years old that, torn between two loyalties—loyalty to his ailing wife and that to his new love—he contemplated suicide. The catastrophic end was, however, mercifully averted. Bertrand Russell forgets that the scientist has also a heart, an all too human heart of feelings and emotions, and that his life, like all human life, is a theatre where both tragedies and comedies are played by the complex elements of human nature and the inscrutable conspiracy of circumstances. Sustained and serene happiness eludes the scientist as much as any other man. It is not unoften that the family and social life of the scientist or the philosopher looks so wan and inharmonious. His angularities or eccentricities are the signs of a being divided against itself. And where there is no harmony in the being, there can be no happiness.

If wealth is no guarantee of happiness, as we all know, poverty is no bar to it. The poor are, on an average, perhaps happier than the rich, unless it is grinding penury that afflicts them. They are happier, because they have fewer desires and are content with what they have and get. The simplicity of their lives safeguards their happiness. But even their happiness is not impervious to grief and suffering. Disasters and calamities spare no mortal.

When modern materialist philosophers and scientists find that unalloyed and unebbing happiness is impossible in human life, they advise the prudence of accepting a modicum of qualified happiness as the utmost one can expect to achieve. But, whether they know it or not, man is so made that he cannot rest permanently content with a qualified or limited happiness. He is ever stung by what is known as divine discontent. But why should a finite, mortal being yearn for an infinite and immortal happiness? Because—and here is a truth of supreme importance which the scientist wilfully ignores—there is in him something or someone that is not finite but infinite, not mortal but immortal, not prone to suffering but eternally blissful. His ceaseless chase after the finite objects of the world is but a hidden chase after the Infinite, hidden from him, because he is ignorant and egoistic, self-severed from the unity of universal existence. He seeks the Infinite, but ignorantly seeks

it in the finite, and flits about like the bee from object to object in the vain hope of finding in them the ocean of divine honey his soul is athirst for. His yearning for unmixed and uninterrupted happiness is not, therefore, an illusion of which he has to cure himself by the remedy prescribed by the scientist, but a signature and prophecy of his destiny. The secret discontent, which dogs him even in the midst of what passing happiness he can snatch from the changing conditions of his life, is the ransom he has to pay for the endless bliss of his immortal existence. The blissfull life of the mystics is a perpetual beacon to him. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee."¹

(To be continued)

RISHABHCHAND

¹ St. Augustine.

LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION

(Continued)

WHAT is the philosophic scepticism that limits the drive of Science? It can be summed up in the following propositions: (i) that all knowledge proceeds from experience, (ii) that our mind is a blank slate on which ideas are inscribed solely by experience, (iii) that experience gives us no justification for prediction, necessary connections, generalisations, scientific induction. There is not even a justification for our belief that the sun will rise tomorrow. There is no justification in our seeking of order, regularity, uniformity, system in Nature, for these can never be discovered by experience, and indeed, let us repeat, it is asserted categorically, experience is the sole means of knowledge.

This is empiricism and its scepticism; it professes a natural love for Science, since Science professes to be experimental and to base its conclusions on the evidence of experience. As a consequence empiricism offers to Science its gift of scepticism and asks Science to give up all its claim to the knowledge of certainty, of causality, of universal order and universal laws. Science has not fully accepted this gift, but at the border-line where philosophy and science meet, Science appears to yield to the temptation of the gift, and to return to her field of inquiry with the limiting and disabling influence of the philosophic empiricism. The effect of this influence has been reinforced by some of the startling discoveries of Science itself. For instance, Science has come to perceive that the behaviour of Matter at its sub-atomic level baffles our attempt at determinate knowledge and at prediction. This is the famous theory in Quantum Mechanics called the Theory of Indeterminacy. This theory has triggered off a great controversy over the question of Causality in Science and Philosophy and the question of Determinism vs. Freewill in Ethics and Theology. In any case, in the present climate, Science seems to be influenced by philosophic empiricism and in turn to supply evidence and support to it.

But while this controversy continues, we perceive that the world is wonderful, and it is the sense of wonder that is the soul of Science; this sense of wonder expresses itself, not in a bundle of statements, but in the meanings that these statements convey, the meanings that the experiences convey, the experiences which are at the root of those statements. Before the invasion of the philosophic empiricism, it was widely admitted that experience by itself is "blind"; but there is in us a cognitive drill which penetrates into our experience and unites the object of experience with our mind and the resultant is the excitement of the self-discovery in the object-discovery, and in the equation of the subject and the object is found the notation of the meaning of experience. This cognitive drill is nothing else than the Reason, the faculty of Ideas and Concepts, the *nisus*, that finds its satisfaction in Understanding. This Reason, it was maintained, is not a blank slate, but an active embryo, which receiving experience of the particular germinates the knowledge of the universal; it is the pregnant bed of the concepts of "all", "unity", "order", "harmony", "system". The joy of Science is not merely in experience, but it is chiefly in the rational interpretation of experience, in fitting a stray flower in the scheme of universal flora, in perceiving connections and necessary connections, in fact, in making a leap from the known to the unknown, in knowing that which is still not experienced. Science, it was understood, was not merely experimental, it was a rational adventure for a rational assurance.

Among many powers of the Reason, the one which has been most instrumental in the progress of Science is its power of induction, which is a process of inferring the universal from the particular. This principle is a stumbling block to the possible triumph of empiricism. Some honest empiricists have admitted their failure to account for the inductive reasoning on the empirical grounds, but dogmatically enough they ignore the problem or postpone the solution of the problem. This creates a hesitation in the entire mood of scientific thinking and acts as a brake in the field of Pure Science. But why don't the empiricists admit their failure?

The answer is that empiricism is a dogma. It assumes that all knowledge is derived from experience, and it refuses to budge

from its position, even when faced with the contrary evidence

Besides, is its own dogmatic statement derived from experience ? Certainly not. It cannot be, for it is a universal statement, and since according to its own admission there can be no experience of universality, no universal statement can be derived from experience. Empiricism is indeed self-refuting.

However, modern empiricism is a revolt against Reason and there is a deeper reason for this revolt. For Reason is glorious but it has serious limitations. For the chief perception of Reason is that of the universals or of unity. And yet, Reason itself admits that it does not understand unity ; on the one hand, it postulates unity to explain the particulars, and yet, on the other hand, unity seems by its nature to consume away within itself all the particulars leaving behind no reality of the particulars. The idea of unity baffles the intellect. The present moment is grasped by its connection with the preceding and the succeeding moments, leading thus the unity of past, present and future, and the only accurate description of such a unity of Time is an all-containing ever-new moment, a description which intellect confesses it does not comprehend. Hence follows the philosophic agnosticism.

What a disappointment ! To understand the particular we go to the universal or to the unity, and this unity simply escapes us ! And, in the bargain, it seems to give an assurance that the particular from the unitarian point of view cannot remain a particular ! We neither know the particular nor the universal !

Empiricists come back on the stage. The particular is frozen by the unknowable universal ? they ask. Is not then the unknowable universal a fiction of the intellect corresponding to no reality ? Particular at least, they argue, is before us ; we know what it is ; true, we cannot know it fully ; but we know at least something of it ! Whereas, with the so-called rational ideas we are led to lose even this bit of knowledge. Let us admit then the limits of our knowledge, but let us be sure and precise of whatever we can legitimately know. Science is already experimental. Let us ask it to renounce its rational aspect, and we shall then declare that the authentic knowledge belongs to Science alone. True, we shall not know the future ; true, we shall not have the certainties ; true also, we

shall not be in a position to answer many questions that are so central to man's enquiry, particularly about the values that he is seeking. But that is inevitable. In the words of Russell: "Science tells us what we can know, but what we can know is little, and if we forget how much we cannot know we become insensitive to many things of very great importance. . . . Uncertainty, in the presence of vivid hopes and fears, is painful, but must be endured if wish to live without the support of comforting fairy tales...To teach how to live without certainty, and yet without being paralysed by hesitation, is perhaps the chief thing that philosophy in our age can still do for those who study it."

We thus seem to be swinging back to empiricism and to its uncertainties, its scepticism. From Scylla to Charybdis ! And back to Scylla with a constant prospect to go again to Charybdis ! In this state of disequilibrium and sandwiched between the conflicting affinities with empiricism and rationalism, Science cannot hope to soar very high and to fulfil its dreams or promises. But the state of disequilibrium suggests that there are truths on both the sides of the thesis and the antithesis, and that our search cannot rest until it has found a synthesis at a higher level.

A few remarks would clarify the situation and lead to the solution. Whatever may be higher knowledge, attainable to us or no, it cannot correct or sublate the facts of our experience ; what we are perceiving is a fact, and this can never be frozen or evaporated into a nullity. If reason nullifies the reality of the particulars, surely, there is something wrong with the Reason. Experience is certainly a way to knowledge. But empiricism does not fully appreciate the fact that so long as experience needs to find its meaning in a larger context, there is some hiatus in experience. It is wrong to say that our sense-experience or ordinary empirical experience is in need of no interpretation and illumination. Our ordinary experiences are, as Rationalism rightly suggests, 'blind', needing to be illuminated by the rational concepts of unity, order, system, etc. The central difficulty is that these concepts baffle our understanding and are themselves in need of illumination. And that illumination must be neither of the nature of ordinary experience nor of the Pure Reason. Everything would fall in its proper place, everything would find its

justification if there is a transcendental experience whose meaning is within itself which embraces particulars and the truth of unity and does not need any external light to illumine it. A self-luminous integral experience would reconcile the claims of empiricism and rationalism. Anything less than the integral would involve a disequilibrium and would disqualify as a sound basis for Science.

In the West, such a basis is hardly perceptible, even though far deep in its most ancient Mysteries, there is a perception which goes beyond empiricism and rationalism. In the East, this basis is there, or was there and can be more easily recovered; but for the moment we do not seem to be in a mood of deep reflection and research, and are likely to receive Science as it comes to us from West, sandwiched and clipped between conflicting theories of Knowledge, in a state of disequilibrium. Let us hope that this mood shall not last long, for if it does, Science will not find its moorings in our Indian set-up and will simply cause the erosion of the values. Science, I think, comes to India to seek its own fulfilment whose promise India secretly holds within herself. It is wrong to suppose that Science is something peculiar to the West; what is peculiar to the West is the modern Science of Matter, but not Science as such. India had developed science to its most sublime heights and intricate details in numerous branches, and its science of the Spirit is the most solid contribution to the world-culture.

It is in this Science of Spirit that we find the affirmation of the Cosmic Consciousness and of the Integral Consciousness, an affirmation, if recognised, would give the most solid foundation for the scientific pursuits and their reconciliation with the highest human and spiritual values. Cosmic Consciousness, Integral Consciousness are not merely abstract ideas; they are experiences, but experiences which transcend the limits of the particular and give a true comprehension of what Reason conceives of unity and fails in its attempt to understand. Unity here is a living fact, a self-luminous fact; the particular too, be it noted, is not frozen, but reveals itself as a demarcation in the totality of the whole. In this experience we have not only the conception of causality, but the actual experience of causality, the working out of the necessary connections by an inherent imperative; the ideas of the Reason thus find in this experience a

total and fulfilling justification. Not only that, but we gain a farther revelation that the method of analysis which is the present method of Science is not the only method of knowing the universe. A far more powerful knowledge can be ours if we approach the universe synthetically and intuitively. And the knowledge thus gained is likely to be much more powerful and much more fruitful. The Rajayogic claim that by the Samyama, the method of Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi, by concentration on the object, the knowledge of the object is revealed, is not a phantasy, but a very natural and simple truth of the yogic field.

The method of Intuition is essentially the method of experience; whereas in science, experience and the field of experience are circumscribed by a mental approach of the mental analysis, in the yogic field, the method is that of experience of identity. And if we reflect on the knowledge-situation, we find that the knowledge of an object can never be adequate unless knowledge transcends its seeking activity and identifies itself with the object and returns from it as a revelation of the object. That and that only would be the indubitable knowledge.

But yogic knowledge has been criticised on the ground that it is subjective, it is supraphysical, and that there is no physical proof of this knowledge and of the object of this knowledge. But it may be replied that it is not true that the physical proof of the yogic knowledge is impossible; but at the same time, it would be irrational to demand a physical proof of supraphysical things. And essentially, we have to admit that all knowledge is at bottom subjective or transcendently subjective. It has again been argued that the yogic knowledge is subject to error and apt to turn into superstition. But, it may be replied that error is not the prerogative of the yogic knowledge alone; the objection would be unsurmountable only if there were no way of eliminating error; but surely, Yoga has in its body the method of inner verification and direct comparison of experiences as the methods of the elimination of error. That experience which embraces all other experiences and is itself self-luminous is the deliverer of true knowledge and Yoga is precisely the Science of this experience, and of the experiences leading to it. But still, it may be argued, there are conflicts among the yogic experiences and among the claims

to truth arising from these experiences. In answer, however, we must point out that in all fields of yogic experiences there are regions with regard to which there are no conflicting claims. At the same time, we must not simplify the conflicting claims by saying that the conflict is only verbal and not real. For, at a certain penultimate region of the spiritual field, there are experiences which seem to be final, and when they come upon our silenced mind, they come with an overwhelmingness of finality. But very often these experiences are followed by some other ones and thus the partiality of the experience is corrected, not by critical or rational reflection, nor by a sublation, by the cancellation of the previous experience, but by the enrichment of the experiences.

But still, the very fact, that there are at a certain stage conflicting experiences by the method of Intuition, shows that Intuition cannot be regarded as the highest method of knowledge. And this indeed we must grant in its fundamental substance. We might say, there must be, if there is to be indubitable knowledge, not only a knowledge by identity, but the knowledge by comprehensive identity; intuition is a torch light, but not the plenary sunlight. The supreme method of knowledge has to be not only intuitive, but comprehensively intuitive, a method by which the whole is grasped, known, realised.

That there is such a means of knowledge is an affirmation of the Veda and the Upanishad, although during the Age of Reason this method was eclipsed. But in modern India, this method of knowledge was eminently revived by Sri Ramakrishna and we find in Sri Aurobindo a consummation of this method and the knowledge by this method.

This consummating knowledge is the all-reconciling knowledge; it is the knowledge that transcends all mental and spiritual agnosticism. It confirms the scientific assumption of the reality of the world and the conceptual certainty of the Infinite and the One, it reconciles the deliverances of experience and those of reflective reason; it unravels from religions their spiritual content and confirms their truths setting them all in a harmony; it is a knowledge that gives the clasp of the Highest and the penetration to the lowest category of Matter; it perceives all the universe as one unity, and all movements as the varied breath of the One Spirit; in its vast consciousness, there is no

distinction between religious and secular, no distinction between sacred and profane; all is spirit and all is sacred; all branches of knowledge are so many angles looking at the one Spirit; Science, Art, Philosophy are the three varying vibrations of one essential movement of knowledge, and there is no conflict between them. Here is the vastness which consummates all aspiration towards perfection and spontaneously harmonises each with all the rest.

(To be continued)

KIREET M. JOSHI

REVIEWS

Die Kunst Indiens (The Art of India) *By Ervin Baktay*. Translated from Hungarian by Edith Roth. German adaptation by Heinz Kucharski. Pub. Akademie Verlag. Berlin.

This magnificent volume on the Art of India illustrated with 444 pictures and 6 colour plates is a worthy tribute to the labours of the eminent Hungarian orientalist Ervin Baktay (1896-1963). The learned doctor visited India in the course of his trip to Tibet, which place he looked upon as the original native place of the Hungarians, and wrote a number of books of which the present one is the main.

The subjects covered in the course of the 29 chapters of this volume are astonishingly varied : history, geography, religion, philosophy, arts, architecture, sculpture and so on. The exposition begins with the background of the country and its inhabitants, followed by a chapter on 'Oldest Art (Stone Age)—Culture of the Indus-valley' and ends with a considered evaluation of the 'Effects of the Western Influence on the Art of India'. The writer rightly includes the Islamic contribution in the total appraisal. And while he generally follows the line taken by western scholars in the interpretation of the Indian values, he does make certain striking observations in some places which are refreshing. He points out that caste and class are not the same in Indian society. He discusses how the Ashoka Pillars testify to the elimination of the Persian and Hellenic influences from Indian Art in the Age of the Mauryas. His remarks on the 'superabundance in Indian Art' remind us of Sri Aurobindo's comments on the subject. Interesting too is his observation that Indian Art is 'Indian, not Buddhistic, Hindu, or Jaina etc.; only their frames speak of the particular religion. The artist had no living models but created from memory and thought-picture shaped and consciously fixed within'.

Dr. Kucharski has done a great service to Indian Art by his discriminative presentation of the illustrations and the commentary.

PETER STEIGER

Kindle the Light By *T. L. Vaswani*. Pub. Gita Pub. House, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Poona 1. Pp. 157, Price Rs. 2.

Miletus, one of the seven Sages of Greece, was asked :

Q : Who is the most ancient ?

A : God.

Q : What is the most beautiful ?

A : The Cosmos.

Q : What is the greatest of all ?

A : Space.

Q : What is the most constant ?

A : Hope.

Q : What is the best of all ?

A : Virtue.

Q : What is the quickest of all ?

A : Thought.

Q : What is the strongest of all ?

A : Necessity.

Q : What is the easiest of all ?

A : To give advice.

Q : And what is the most difficult ?

A : To know thyself. (P. 48)

And *to know thyself* is the theme of this anthology of writings of Sadhu Vaswani. The topics are varied but the approach is everywhere the same, to seek the Light in every form in creation, awake to the Light in oneself and in the vision of Light to find the key of Love. "Love lifteth the Veil" (Jela-ud-Din Rumi) over the mystery of existence and makes life meaningful.

The pages of this book are full of this aroma of love.

M. P. PANDIT



HEART FULL
OF JOY
TODAY

When the health is good, one looks forward travelling, with a heart full of joy to enjoy the beauty of Nature.

You too should take Sadhana's wonderful medicine, two teaspoonsfull of Mritasanjibani mixed with four teaspoons of Mahadraksharista (six years old), twice a day after meals, to keep you in good health. They remove weariness, increase the appetite and digestive powers and help you get rid of cough and cold.



Adhyaksha Dr. Joges Chandra Ghose, M.A.
Ayurved-Sastri, F.C.S. (London) M.C.S.
(America) Formerly Professor of Chemistry,
Bhagalpur College.

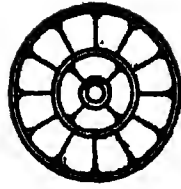
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The Advent



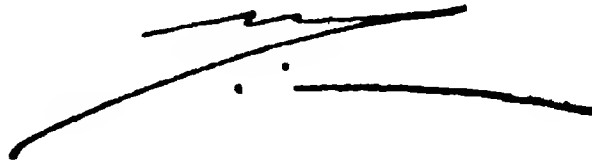
How to stop discussions in the mind?

The first condition is to talk as little as possible.

The second is to think just of what you are doing at the moment and not of what you have to do or of what you have done before.

Never regret what is past or imagine what will be.

Check pessimism in your thoughts as much as you can and become a voluntary optimist.



The ADVENT

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August 1967

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God works through the brain, but
the brain is only one of His
instruments.

—SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS

“SAVITRI”

(An Introduction)

SAVITRI, the poem, the word of Sri Aurobindo is the cosmic Answer to the cosmic Question. And Savitri, the person, the Godhead, the Divine Woman is the Divine's response to the human aspiration.

The world is a great question mark. It is a riddle, eternal and ever-recurring. Man has faced the riddle and sought to arrive at a solution since he has been given a mind to seek and interrogate.

What is this universe ? From where has it come ? Whither is it going ? What is the purpose of it all ? Why is man here ? What is the object of his existence ?

Such is the mode of human aspiration. And Ashwapati in his quest begins to explore the world and see what it is, the way it is built up. He observes it rising tier upon tier, level upon level of consciousness. He mounts these stairs, takes cognisance of the modes and functions of each and passes on enriched by the experi-

ences that each contributes to his developing consciousness. The ascent he finds is from ignorance to knowledge. The human being starts from the darkest bed of ignorance, the solid basis of rock as it were, the body, the material existence. Ignorance here is absolute inconscience. Out of the total absence of consciousness, the being begins to awake and rise to a gradually developing—widening, deepening and heightening—consciousness. That is how Ashwapati advances, ascends from a purely bodily life and consciousness, to the next rung of the ladder, the first appearance and expression of life-force, the vital consciousness—energies and forms of the small lower vital. He moves on, moves upward, there is a growing light in and mixed with the obscurity; ignorance begins to shed its hard and dark coating one by one and gives place to directed and motivated energies. He meets beings and creatures appropriate to those levels crawling and stirring and climbing, moved by the laws governing the respective regions. In this way Ashwapati passes on into the higher vital, into the border of the mental.

Ashwapati now observes with a clear vividness that all these worlds and the beings and forces that inhabit them are stricken as it were with a bar sinister branded upon their bodies. In spite of an inherent urge of ascension the way is not a straight road but devious and crooked breaking into by-lanes and blind alleys. There is a great corruption and perversion of natural movements towards Truth: falsehoods and pretensions, arrogance of blindness reign here in various degrees. Ashwapati sought to know the wherefore of it all. So he goes behind, dives down and comes into a region that seems to be the source and basis of all ignorance and obscurity and falsehood. He comes into the very heart of the Night, the abyss of consciousness. He meets there the Mother of Evil and the sons of darkness. He stands before

“...the gate of the false Infinite,
An eternity of disastrous absolutes.”¹

Here are the forces that pull down and lure away to perdition all

¹ Book II : Canto 8 : p.250.

that man's aspirations and the world's urge seek to express and build of Divine things. It is the world in which the forces of the original inconstancy find their primitive play. They are dark and dangerous : they prey upon earth's creatures who are not content with being vassals of darkness but try to move to the Light.

Dangerous is this passage for the celestial aspirant :

“Where the red Wolf waits by the fordless stream,
And Death's black eagles scream to the precipice...”¹

He must be absolutely vigilant, absolutely on his guard, absolutely sincere.

“Here must the traveller of the upward way—
For daring Hell's kingdoms winds the heavenly route—
Pause or pass slowly through that perilous space,
A prayer upon his lips and the great Name.”²

But there is no escape. The divine traveller has to pass through this region. For it lies athwart his path to the goal. Not only so, it is necessary to go through this Night. For Ashwapati

“Knew death for a cellar of the house of life,
In destruction felt creation's hasty pace,
Knew loss as the price of a celestial gain
And hell as a short cut to heaven's gates.”³

Ashwapati now passes into the higher luminous regions. He enters regions of larger breath and wider movement—the higher vital and then into the yet more luminous region of the higher mind. He reaches the heavens where immortal sages and the divinities and the gods themselves dwell. Even these Ashwapati finds to be only partial truths, various aspects, true but limited, of the One Reality beyond. Thus he leaves all behind and reaches into the single

¹ Bk. II : Canto 8 : p.260.

² Bk. II : Canto 7 : p. 238

³ Bk. II : Canto 8 : p. 262

sole Reality, the transcendental Truth of things, the status vast and infinite and eternal, immutable existence and consciousness and bliss.

“A Vastness brooded free from sense of Space,
An Everlastingness cut off from Time...
A stillness absolute, incommunicable.”¹

Here seems to be the end of the quest, and one would fain stay there ever and ever in that status

“...occult, impenetrable,—
Infinite, eternal, unthinkable, alone.”²

Ashwapati was perhaps about to be lured into that Bliss but suddenly a doubt enters into him—there is a hesitation, a questioning; he hears a voice :

“The ego is dead; we are free from being and care,
We have done with birth and death and work and fate.
O Soul, it is too early to rejoice !
Thou hast reached the boundless silence of the Self,
Thou hast leaped into a glad divine abyss;
But where hast thou thrown self’s mission and self’s power ?
On what dead bank on the Eternal’s road ?”³

Ashwapati veers round. A new perception, a new consciousness begins to open within him. A new urge moves him. He has to start on a new journey, a new quest and achievement. The world exists neither as a Truth nor as an illusion in itself. It exists in and through the Mother of the worlds. There is a motive in its existence and it is her will that is being worked out in that existence. The world moves for the fulfilment of a purpose that is being evolved through earth-life and human life. The ignorant incomplete human life upon earth is not the be-all and end-all of the life here. That life has to

¹ Bk. III : Cantos 1-2 : pp. 349 ; 351.

² Bk. III : Canto 1 : p. 350.

³ Bk. III : Canto 2 : p. 351.

evolve into a life of light and love and joy perfect here below. Nature as it is now will be transmuted into a new pure and radiant substance. Ashwapati is filled with this new urge and inspired by this new vision. He sees and understands now the truth of his life, the goal that has to be achieved, the great dream that has to be realised here upon earth in and through matter. He sees how nature has been labouring ceaselessly and tirelessly through aeons through eternity onward. He is now almost impatient to see the consummation here and now. The divine Voice however shows him the wisdom of working patiently, hasten slowly. The Voice admonishes him :

“I ask thee not to merge thy heart of flame
In the Immobile’s wide uncaring bliss...
Thy soul was born to share the laden Force. . .
Obey thy nature and fulfil thy fate :
Accept the difficulty and godlike toil,
For the slow-paced omniscient purpose live...
All things shall change in God’s transfiguring hour.”¹

But the human flame once kindled is hard to put down. It seeks an immediate result. It does not understand the fulness of time. So Ashwapati cries out :

“Heavy and long are the years our labour counts
And still the seals are firm upon man’s soul
And weary is the ancient Mother’s heart...
Linger not long with thy transmuting hand.
Pressed vainly on one golden bar of Time...
Let a great word be spoken from the heights
And one great act unlock the doors of Fate.”²

This great cry of the human soul moved the Divine Mother and she granted at last its prayer. She answered bestowing of her motherly comfort to the yearning thirsty soul :

¹ Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 380 ; 386.

² Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 390-391.

“O strong forerunner, I have heard thy cry.
 One shall descend and break the iron Law...
 A seed shall be sown in Death’s tremendous hour,
 A branch of heaven transplant to human soil;
 Nature shall overleap her mortal step;
 Fate shall be changed by an unchanging will.”¹

And She herself came down upon earth as Ashwapati’s own daughter to undertake the human labour and accomplish the Divine work.

II

The Divine Mother is upon earth as a human creature. She is to change the mortal earth into an immortal paradise. Earth at present is a bundle of material inconscience. The Supreme Consciousness has manifested itself as supreme unconsciousness. The Divine has lost itself in pulverising itself, scattering itself abroad. Immortality is thus entombed here below in death. The task of the incarnate Supreme Consciousness is to revive the death-bound divinity, to free the human consciousness in its earthly life from the obscurity of the material unconsciousness, re-install it in its original radiant status of the Divine Consciousness.

Such is Savitri’s mission. This mission has two sessions or periods. The first, that of preparation; the second, that of fulfilment. Savitri, the human embodiment was given only twelve months out of her earthly life and in that space of time she had to do all the preparation. She knew her work from her very birth, she was conscious of her nature and the mission she was entrusted with. Now she is facing the crisis. Death is there standing in front. What is to be done, how is she to proceed? She was told she is to conquer Death, she is to establish immortal life upon mortal earth. The Divine Voice rings out :

“Arise, O soul, and vanquish Time and Death.”²

¹ Bk. III : Canto 4 : pp. 391-392.

² Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 539.

Yes, she is ready to do it, but not for herself, but for her Love, the being who was the life of her life. Savitri is the Divine Consciousness but here in the mortal body she is clothed in the human consciousness; it is the human consciousness that she is to lead upward and beyond and it is in and through the human consciousness that the Divine Realisation has to be expressed and established. The human Savitri declares : If Death is conquered, it is for the sake of Satyavan living eternally with her. She seems to say : What I wish to see is the living Satyavan and I united with him for ever. I do not need an earthly life without him; with him I prefer to be in another world if necessary away from the obscurity and turmoil of this earth here.

“My strength is taken from me and given to Death,
 Why should I lift my hands to the shut heavens...
 Why should I strive with earth’s unyielding laws
 Or stave off death’s inevitable hour ?
 This surely is best to pactise with my fate
 And follow close behind my lover’s step
 And pass through night from twilight to the sun...”¹

But a thunderous voice descends from above shaking Savitri to the very basis of her existence.

“And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows
 The work was left undone for which it came ?”²

Thus a crisis very similar to that which Ashwapati had to face now confronts Savitri also. Both of them were at the crossroads away from the earth in the pure delights of the heavens or in the world labouring on earth’s soil. Savitri’s soul was now revealed to her in its fullness. She viewed the mighty destiny for which she had come down and the great work she had to achieve here upon earth, not any personal or individual human satisfaction or achievement but

¹ Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 539.

² Bk. VII : Canto 2 : p. 540.

a cosmic fulfilment, a global human realisation. The godhead in Savitri is now fully awake, established in its plenitude—the Divinity incarnate in the human frame. All the godheads, all the goddess-emanations now entered into her and moulded the totality of her mighty stature.

Here begins then the second stage of her mission,—her work and achievement, the conquest of Death. Only the Divine human being can conquer Death. Savitri follows Death step by step revealing gradually the mystery of Death, his personality and his true mission, although the dark God thinks that it is he who is taking away Satyavan and Savitri along with him, to his own home, his black annihilation. For Death is that in its first appearance, it is utter destruction, nothingness, non-existence. So the mighty Godhead declares in an imperious tone to the mortal woman Savitri :

“This is my silent dark immensity,
This is the home of everlasting Night,
This is the secrecy of Nothingness.
Entombing the vanity of life’s desires...
Hopedst thou still always to last and love ?”¹

Indeed Death is not merely a destruction of the body, it is in reality nothingness, non-being. The moment being, existence, reality manifested itself, established itself as a material fact, simultaneously there came out and stood against it, its opposite non-being, non-existence, non-reality; against an everlasting ‘yes’ there was posited an everlasting ‘no’. And in fact, this everlasting No proves to be a greater effective reality, it has wound itself around every constituent atom of the universe. That is what has expressed itself in the material domain as the irreversible degradation of energy and in the mortal world it is denial and doubt and falsehood—it is that which brings about failure in life, and frustration, misery and grief. But then Savitri’s vision penetrated beyond and she saw, Death is a way of achieving the end more swiftly and more completely. The negation is an apparent obstacle in order to increase, to purify and intensify the speed of the

¹ Bk. IX : Canto 2 : p. 661.

process by which the world and humanity is being remodelled and re-created. This terrible Godhead pursues the human endeavour till the end; until he finds that nothing more is to be done; then his mission too is fulfilled.¹ So a last cry, the cry of a desperate dying Death, pierces the universe and throws the final challenge to Savitri:

“O human claimant to immortality,
Reveal thy power, lay bare thy spirit’s force,
Then will I give back to thee Satyavan.
Or if the Mighty Mother is with thee,
Show me her face that I may worship her;
Let deathless eyes look into the eyes of Death...”²

Death’s desire, his prayer too is fulfilled. He faces Savitri but this is not the Savitri against whom he fought. Whose is this voice ?

“I hail thee almighty and victorious Death,
Thou grandiose Darkness of the Infinite...
I have given thee thy awful shape of dread
And thy sharp sword of terror and grief and pain
To force the soul of man to struggle for light...”³

What happens thereafter is something strange and tremendous and miraculous. Light flashed all around, a leaping tongue of fire spread out and the dark form of Death was burnt—not to ashes but to blazing sparks of light :

“His body was eaten by light, his spirit devoured.”⁴

¹ We are reminded here of a parallelism in Goethe’s conception of the role of Satan (the Negative Principle) in human affairs. Satan is not merely a destroying devil, he is a constructive angel. For it is he

*Who must goad and tease
And toil to serve creation.*

whenever

Man’s efforts sink below his proper level.

² Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 745.

³ Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 747.

⁴ Bk. X : Canto 4 : p. 749.

Thus Death came to his death—not to death in reality but to a new incarnation. Death returned to his original divine Reality, an emanation of the Divine Mother.

“A secret splendour rose revealed to sight
Where once the vast embodied Void had stood
Night the dim mask had grown a wonderful face.”¹

In that domain of pure transcendent light stood face to face the human Savitri and the transformed Satyavan.

III

Savitri has entered into the deathless luminous world where there is only faultless beauty, stainless delight and an unmeasured self-gathered strength. Savitri heard the melodious voice of the Divine :

You have now left earth's miseries and its impossible conditions, you have reached the domain of un-alloyed felicity and you need not go back to the old turbulent life : dwell here both of you and enjoy eternal bliss.

But Savitri answered firm and moveless :

“I climb not to thy everlasting Day,
Even as I have shunned thy eternal Night...
Earth is the chosen place of mightiest souls;
Earth is the heroic spirit's battlefield...
Thy servitudes on earth are greater, king,
Than all the glorious liberties of heaven.”²

Once more Savitri, even like Ashwapati, has to make a choice between two destinies, two soul-movements—although the choice is already made even before it is offered to her. Ashwapati had to

¹ Bk. XI : Canto 1 : p. 762.

² Bk. XI : Canto 1 : p. 770.

abandon, we know, the silent immutable transcendent status of pure light in order to bathe in this lower earthly light. Savitri too as the proto-type of human consciousness chose and turned to this light of the earth.

The Rishi of the Upanishad declared : they who worship only Ignorance enter into darkness, but they who worship knowledge alone enter into a still darker darkness. This world of absolute light which Savitri names 'everlasting day' is what the Upanishdic Rishi sees and describes as the golden lid upon the face of the Sun. The Sun is the complete integral light of the Truth in its fulness. The golden covering has to be removed if one is to see the Sun itself—to live the integral life, one has to possess the integral truth.

So it is that Savitri comes down upon earth and standing upon its welcoming soil speaks to Satyavan as though consoling him for having abandoned their own abode in heaven to dwell among mortal men :

“Heaven’s touch fulfils but cancels not our earth...
Still am I she who came to thee mid the murmur
Of sunlit leaves upon this forest verge...
All that I was before, I am to thee still...”¹

Voicing Satyavan’s thought and feeling, all humanity, the whole world in joy and gratefulness, utters this *mantra* of thanksgiving:

“If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more at any happy change.”²

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

¹ Bk. XII : p. 808.

² Bk. XII : p. 812.

AN OLD LETTER OF SRI AUROBINDO

Pondicherry
30th August 1920

Dear Dr. Munje,

As I have already wired to you, I find myself unable to accept your offer of the Presidentship of the Nagpur Congress. There are reasons seen within the political field itself which in any case would have stood in my way. In the first place I have never signed and would never care to sign as a personal declaration of faith in the Congress creed, as my own is of a different character. In the next place since my retirement from British India I have developed an outlook and views which have diverged a great deal from those I held at the time and, as they are remote from present actualities and do not follow the present stream of political action, I should find myself very much embarrassed what to say to the Congress. I am entirely in sympathy with all that is being done so far as its object is to secure liberty for India, but I should be unable to identify myself with the programme of any of the parties. The President of the Congress is really a mouth-piece of the Congress and to make from the presidential chair a purely personal pronouncement miles away from what the Congress is thinking and doing would be grotesquely out of place. Not only so, but nowadays the President has a responsibility in connection with the All India Congress Committee and the policy of the Congress during the year and other emergencies that may arise which, apart from my constitutional objection and, probably, incapacity to discharge official duties of any kind or to put on any kind of harness, I should be unable to fulfil, since it is impossible for me to throw over suddenly my fixed programme and settle at once in British India. These reasons would in any case have come in the way of my accepting your offer.

The central reason, however, is thus that I am no longer first and foremost a politician, but have definitely commenced another kind of work with a spiritual basis, a work of spiritual, social, cultural and economic reconstruction of an almost revolu-

tionary kind, and am ever making or at least supervising a sort of practical or laboratory experiment in that sense which needs all the attention and energy that I can have to spare. It is impossible for me to combine political work of the current kind and this at the beginning. I should practically have to leave it aside, and this I cannot do, as I have taken it up as my mission for the rest of my life. This is the true reason of my inability to respond to your call.

I may say that in any case I think you would be making a wrong choice in asking me to take Tilak's place at your head. No one now alive in India, or at least no one yet known, is capable of taking that place, but myself least of all. I am an idealist to the marrow, and could only be useful when there is something drastic to be done, a radical or revolutionary turn to be taken, (I do not mean revolutionary by violence,) a movement with an ideal aim and direct method to be inspired and organized. Tilak's policy of "responsive co-operation," contained agitation and obstruction whenever needed—and that would be oftener than not in the present circumstances—is, no doubt, the only alternative to some form of non-co-operation of passive resistance. But it would need at its head a man of his combined suppleness, skill and determination to make it effective. I have not the suppleness and skill—at least of the kind needed—and could only bring the determination, supposing I accepted the policy, which I could not do practically, as, for reasons of my own, nothing could induce me to set my foot in the new Councils. On the other hand a gigantic movement of non-co-operation merely to get some Punjab officials punished or to set up again the Turkish Empire which is dead and gone, shocks my ideas both of proportion and of common sense. I could only understand it as a means of "embarrassing the Government" and seizing hold of immediate grievances in order to launch an acute struggle for autonomy after the manner of Egypt and Ireland, though no doubt without the element of violence. All the same, it could be only on a programme involving an entire change of the creed, function and organisation and policy of the Congress, making it a centre of national reconstruction and not merely of political agitation that I could—if I had not the other reason I have spoken of—enter the political field but unfortunately the poli-

tical mind and habits created by the past methods of the Congress do not make practicable at the moment. I think you will see that, holding these ideas, it is not possible for me to intervene and least of all be in the chair of the President.

Might I suggest that the success of the Congress hardly depends on the presence of a single person and one who has long been in obscurity. The friends who call on me are surely wrong in thinking that the Nagpur Congress will be uninspiring without me. The national movement is surely strong enough now to be inspired with its own idea especially at a time of stress like the present. I am sorry to disappoint ; but I have given the reasons that compel me and I cannot see how it is avoidable.

Yours Sincerely,
AUROBINDO GHOSE

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM : (V) REPRESSIVE MEASURES

HOUSE SEARCHES

ONE wonders what would happen in any European country if the police as a recompense for their utter inefficiency and detective incapacity were armed with the power and allowed to use it freely for raiding the houses of respectful citizens, ransack the property of absent occupants and leaving it unsafe and unprotected, carrying off the business books of Presses, newspapers and other commercial concerns, the private letters of individuals, books publicly sold and procurable in every book shop, violating the sanctity of correspondence between wife and husband, searching the persons of ladies of the house even though it be by female hands and the trampling on the sanctity of the home, the dignity of the person and the self respect which every race worthy of existence holds to be dearer than life itself. And all this in spite of the fact exemplified hundred times over that these inquisitions are wholly infructuous and can serve no purpose but harassment and exasperation. Usually the searches are undertaken, if we do not err, on the vague information of these disreputable hirelings used as spies and informers, the statements of lying approvers eager to save their skins by jeopardising innocent men and confessions to the police of arrested prisoners made either for the same purpose or dictated by a morbid vanity and light-headed braggadocio which invents facts and details in order to give dignity to petty crime and magnitude to small and foolish undertakings. The ludicrously irrelevant and useless nature of the articles which are the sole reward of this odious activity are, its sufficient condemnation. Even if the widespread conspiracy dreamed of by authorities were a fact is it conceivable that respectable men, knowing the police to be on the alert, would risk liberty and property by storing bombs, looted ornaments or treasonous correspondence in their houses ? We are aware that the right of house search is a necessary weapon in the hands of authority for the suppression of crime, but it was never meant that this should be misused as in order to supply the place of detective ability in the

the Police. House searches are unwarrantable unless the information on which they proceed is precise, reliable and highly probable. Judging from results not one of these epithets can be applied to the numerous searches which are now becoming a standing feature of life in Bengal. And if the search of the persons of ladies is to become another common feature of these domiciliary visits, we fear that the patience of people jealously sensitive on these matters will not long endure the strain. Surely, the higher authorities ought to have sufficient good sense to draw inevitable conclusion from experience, perceive the limitations of this weapon and, if not for the possible evil consequence of creating still greater disaffection, yet for its barren inutility, renounce its excessive use.

POLICE UNREST IN THE PUNJAB

The action of some of the statesmen of this country seems to be guided by the principle that the best way to bring about a particular object is to try and promote its opposite. They certainly desire the political unrest to cease, but their action seems to be carefully calculated to prolong it. No more irritating action could have been taken in the present state of the public mind than the persistence in sedition-hunting which is being practised on a large scale in the Punjab. There is not the least sign of trouble or violence or even widespread agitation of any kind in that province. The causes which excited agitation and violence formerly were purely local and, with the removal of the cause, the effect, as it was bound to do, disappeared. Since then, the Punjab has been profoundly quiet, and the opposition to the Convention Congress and the convocation of the Hindu Sabha, presided over by so inoffensive a personage as Sri Pratul Chandra Chatterjee, were the only signs of life it gave. We wonder, is it the first-mentioned activity which has led to the raids, searches and arrests ? The almost universal opposition to a body which has faithfully excluded the Nationalists and enjoys the support and patronage of Mr. Gokhale, may seem to the authorities a certain sign of widespread seditious feeling in the land. Is it by stirring up sedition with a police pole that the Punjab bureaucrats think they can get rid of unrest ?

THE PATIALA CASE

The Patiala case has developed its real objective, which is the destruction of the Arya Samaj, the men arrested being merely pawns in the game. The speech of the counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Grey, in no way sets out an ordinary case against individuals, nor is there any passage in it which gives any light as to particular evidence against the persons on their trial, but from beginning to end it is an arrangement of the Arya Samaj as a body whose whole object, semi-open rather than secret, is the subversion of British rule. Mr. Norton, taking advantage of the presence of Sj. Aurobindo Ghosh in the dock, attempted to build up in the Alipore case an elaborate indictment of the whole national movement as a gigantic conspiracy, but he did not neglect the individual cases and made some attempt to conceal the extra judicial object of his oratory by a continual reference to actual evidence, relevant or irrelevant, in the case. Mr. Grey has not given himself that trouble. The political character of his advocacy is open and avowed. But he follows his Calcutta precursor in the ludicrous jumps of his logic from trivial premises to gigantically incongruous conclusions, in his heroic attempt to make bricks out of straw. His chief arguments are that the Arya Samajists read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee*,—to say nothing of the long defunct *Bandemataram*,—and that some of the prominent members of the Arya Samaj are politicians and yet remain members of the Arya Samaj. The perfectly general interpretations by Swamy Dayananda of the Vedic view of politics, are the basis of his attack, and even the vehement character of the great reformer's polemics against other religions, the orthodox Hindu included, are pressed into the service of this unique argument. And all this is used to prejudice men under trial on a serious charge. Mr. Norton trifled with the traditions of the British bar by his pressing of trivial and doubtful evidence against the accused in the Alipore case, but it seems to us that Mr. Grey has departed still further from those lofty traditions. And what if the Patiala court decides that the Arya Samaj is a seditious body, seditious in origin, seditious in intention, seditious in action? Will the Government prescribe as an illegal association this wealthy, powerful

and highly organised community containing more than half the brains and activity of the Punjab ? Already the charge has been made that by giving special, privileges to the Mahomedans the Government abandoned definitely the principle of religious neutrality on which their rule has hitherto been founded. The present Governor of the Punjab is possibly capable of such a step,—after the whitewashing of the police in the Gulab Bano case and his speech to the Loyalist deputation, we can believe him capable of any rash headstrong step. Fortunately, there is little likelihood that Mr. Grey's oratory will be any more effective than Mr. Norton's.

THE ARYA SAMAJ AND POLITICS

We have received a communication from a member of the Samaj in which he puts to us certain pointed questions relating to the aims, character and works of the Samaj and of its founder's teachings. We have not that direct and first-hand knowledge which would enable us to answer these questions with any authority. But on the general question our views are known. Aryaism is not an independent religion. It is avowedly an attempt to revive the Vedic religion in its pristine purity. The Vedic religion is a national religion, and it embraces in its scope all the various activities of the national life. Swami Dayananda as a restorer of Vedicism included the theory of politics in his scope and revealed the intensely national character of the Hindu religion and morality. His work was avowedly a work of national regeneration. In dealing with the theory of politics as based on the Vedic religion he had naturally to include the truth that independence is the true and normal condition of a nation and all lapse into subjection must be a sin and degeneration, temporary in its nature. No man can deny this great truth. Freedom is the goal of humanity and Aryanism was in its nature a gospel of freedom, individual freedom, social freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom in all things, and the accomplishment of such an all-pervading liberation cannot come about without bringing national freedom in its train. If to perceive these truths of Vedism and of nature is to be political and seditious, then Swami Dayananda's teaching was political and seditious and the religion he preached may be stigmatised as political and

sedition. But if sedition be limited to its proper meaning, an attempt by illegal and violent means to bring about the fall of the established authority or prepare by word or action lawless opposition and revolution, then there is no sedition in the Swami's preaching or in the belief and actions of the Arya Samaj. They used the perfectly legitimate means of strengthening the national life at all points and their objective is national regeneration through an active and free religion, not political revolution. Individual members may be Loyalists, Moderates, Nationalists, even Terrorists, but a religious body is not responsible for the political opinions of its individual members. The religious teaching of Swami Dayananda was inspired by national motives, not political; and the aims of the Arya Samaj are national not political.

THE ARYA DISCLAIMER

The leaders of the Arya Samaj have issued a manifesto disclaiming the political motives attributed to them by the Counsel for the Prosecution in his extraordinary opening address at Patiala. But is there any use in these repeated disclaimers ? To a certain type of official mind, not in the minority in this country, every movement, body, organ of opinion or centre of activity that makes for national strength, efficiency or manhood is by that very fact suspect and indeed self-convicted as seditious and its very existence a crime to be punished by the law. The Governor of the Punjab is either himself an official of this class or swayed by advisers of that temper. Under such circumstances it is enough to issue once for all a strong and dignified repudiation of the charge and then proceed calmly with the great work the Samaj has undertaken, serenely strong and unperturbed in good fortune or evil fortune, good report or evil report, confident in God's grace and the spiritual force communicated by the founder. This is the only course worthy of a manly community professing a robust and virile religion. Anxious repetition of unheaded disclaimers seems to us undignified and futile.

WHAT IS SEDITION ?

The question, what is sedition, one of those Chinese puzzles which it seems impossible to solve, nevertheless, presses for solution. In Nagpur it has been established that to laugh at the holder of a Government title is sedition. In the Swaraj case Justice Chandavarkar has declared it to be the law that to condemn terrorism in strong language and trace it to its source is sedition. At Patiala it is contended that to read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee* is sedition. We are not quite sure that at Patiala the prosecuting counsel did not hint that to bring Christianity or Mahomedanism into contempt or hatred is sedition. And we have these remarkable cases in the Punjab, where to translate Seeley's *Expansion of England* or Mr. Bryan's opinion of British rule in India seems to have a fair chance of being established as sedition. Mr. Stead's *Review of Review* is now known to be a seditious publication. We are not sure, either, that the *Indian Daily News* is not even worse, for it is continually trying to bring the police, who are an indispensable part of the Government established by law, into contempt and hatred, and the incorrigible persistence of its efforts is sufficient proof of motive, if not of conspiracy. Now one of the charges against a Punjab accused is that he wrote impugning the character of the subordinate police service—just like the *Indian Daily News* of Sir Andrew Fraser. We would suggest that Sir Andrew Fraser should be arrested in England and brought here to answer to the outraged police for the remarks passed by the Police Commission. The reasoning is perfectly fair. Any strong criticism, especially if it is persistent, lowers the reputation of the Government and creates in people a tendency to belittle, that is to say, have a contempt for authority established by law. It is still worse if the Government is accused of injustice, say, in the matter of deportations or the Gulab Bano case; for that inevitably creates hatred. Therefore strong criticism of the Government is sedition. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *Punjabee* strongly criticise the Government. Therefore they are seditious papers and their readers seditious conspirators. Every official is a member of the Government established by law; therefore to criticise strongly an official or a policeman, still more, officials or policemen as a class, is sedition. Christia-

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nity is the religion of the Government established by law; to criticise Christianity is to bring Christians into contempt; the Government are Christians; therefore to criticise Christianity is to bring the Government established by law into contempt. That is sedition. Therefore to criticise Christianity is sedition. To say that repression fosters Terrorism may be true, but it is seditious. To suggest a Press censorship, seriously or ironically, is to bring the administration of the law of sedition into contempt, that is, to bring the administrators into contempt; and the administrators are the Government established by law. Therefore Mr. Stead's Open Letter to Lord Morley is seditious. We are almost afraid to go on, lest, finally, we should end by proving that *The Englishman* itself is an intolerably seditious rag,—for does it not try to bring Sir Edward Baker and the Government generally into contempt by intimating genially that they are liars, idiots and good for nothing weaklings,—in connection with the Reforms and their unwillingness to put the whole population of India into prison? Would it not save trouble to prohibit speech or writing in India altogether?

LAJPATRAI'S LETTERS

The case of Parmanand, the Arya Samaj teacher, whom with a singular pusillanimity the D.A.V. College authorities have dismissed before anything was proved against him, has been of more than usual interest because of the parade with which Lajpatrai's letters to him were brought forward. The letters were innocent enough on the face of them, but prejudice and suspicion were deliberately manufactured out of the connection with Krishna Varma, the expression "revolutionary" the use of the word "boys," and an anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in connection with the Punjab Government's ill-advised land legislation. The bubble had been speedily pricked by the simple statement of facts in the *Punjabee* and by Lajpatrai's own evidence. That Lajpatrai was acquainted with Shyamji Krishna Varma when he was in England, was known already; so were many men who worked with him, Sir Henry Cotton among others, when he was only an enthusiastic Home Ruler and violently opposed to violence. The project of a Nationalist Servants of India Society well-

equiped with a library and other appointments for political education was well advertised and known to the whole country previous to the first deportations. The anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in the letter expresses an apprehension, not a desire, and merely shows that Lajpatrai was uneasy at the rate at which the discontent was swelling and feared that it might lead to an outbreak prematurely forestalling the use of a peaceful pressure on the Government. It is remarkable how throughout his career the honesty and consistency of Lala Lajpatrai's adherence to a peaceful but strenuous Nationalism has been vindicated at every step, and this last revelation of his private and even secret letters is an ordeal of fire out of which he has triumphantly emerged with his consistency and his innocence wholly established.

A NERVOUS SAMAJ

It is with great regret that we find ourselves compelled to enlarge on the hint we gave in our last issue and comment adversely on the methods by which the Arya Samaj is attempting to save itself from the displeasure of the Government. It is well that it should have disclaimed sedition and repudiated the charge of being not a religious but a political body. But to run nervously to all and sundry for a testimonial of respectability, to sue for a certificate of loyalty to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and express gratitude for an ungracious, ambiguous and minatory letter of reply, to prejudge by dismissal a man whose guilt has yet to be proved, are actions which show that Swami Dayananda's religion may have emancipated the intellects of the leading Arya Samajists but has done little to elevate their character. We must also express our amazement at the action of the Samaj in accepting the resignation by Lala Lajpatrai of his offices on the various governing bodies of the Samaj. There are two men who are the glory of the Samaj and by whose adherence and prominence it commands the respect and admiration of all India, Lala Lajpatrai and Lala Munshiram. By its action with regard to the former, the Samaj will lose heavily, it has already lost heavily, in public estimation. In his generous anxiety for the body to which he has devoted the greater part of his life-work, Lala Lajpatrai offered to it the chance of freeing itself from the attacks its enemies

founded upon his connection with it. It was an offer which he was bound to make, but the Samaj ought to have refused. Lajpatrai's only offence is that he has worked and suffered for his country. By its action the Samaj has announced to the whole world that no man must dare to feel and act, however blamelessly, for his country if he wishes to be recognised by the Samaj. If so, Aryaism will perish from the face of India and leave no trace behind. The world has no use any longer for religious bodies which exclude courage, manliness, generosity, justice and patriotism from their moral practice.

THE NEW POLICY

A policy of conciliation, a policy of trust in the people, a policy liberal, progressive, sure if slow,—that was the forecast made by the Moderate astrologers when the Reform comet sailed into our startled heavens. The prophets and augurs of the Anglo-Indian Press friendly to Moderate India—friendly on condition of our giving up all aspirations that go beyond the Reforms—prophesied high, loud and often to the same purpose, and if, like the Roman augurs, they winked and smiled mysteriously at each other when they met, the outside world was not supposed to know anything of their private opinions. Even the disillusionment caused by the publication of the Councils Rules has not prevented this party of wise and able politicians from supporting by participation the Reforms which they condemned, and belauding the intention of the Anglo-Indian reformers while swearing dismally and violently at their practice. Bad as it is, we must co-operate so as to make the best of the new measure. To make the best of a bad measure is to make it a success and so prevent or delay the coming of a better. This at least is our idea of the matter, but we belong to a party not of wise and able politicians to take the full profit of that which they condemn as disastrous and injurious, but of men who have the misfortune still to believe in logic, principle and experience. To be logical is to be a mere theorist, to cling to principle is to be a doctrinaire and to be guided by experience, the world's and our own, is to be unpractical. Only those whose theory is confused and practice self-contradictory and haphazard, can be wise politicians and capable of guiding the country aright. From this standpoint a procla-

mation of all India as seditious is, doubtless, the first step in the new policy, the policy of conciliation and liberalism. It is the sign-manual of the great reformer, Lord Morley, upon his work, the loud-tongued harbinger of the golden age.

No particular motive can be alleged for this sudden proclamation, nor is any alleged. The people are left to speculate in the dark as to the mystic motives of Lords Minto and Morley in this remarkable step forward, or to get what light and comfort they can from the speculations of our Anglo-Indian friends and advisers, who seem to be as much in the dark as ourselves and can only profess their blind religious head in the necessity and beneficence of the measure and appeal to all patriotic Indians to cooperate in coercing the national movement into silence. If India had been full of meetings of a seditious and doubtful nature, the necessity of the measure could have been established. Even if the national life were pulsating swiftly though blamelessly, its "actiology"—if we may use a word which may possibly be condemned by Mr. Petman or Mr. Grey as seditious,—could have been understood, though not its necessity. But at present, with the exception of an occasional scantily attended meeting in the Calcutta squares, the only political meetings held are those in which abhorrence of Terrorism is expressed or Vigilance Committees of leading citizens organised to patrol the E.B.S.R. at night even in this chilly weather, and those in which the Deccan Sabha drinks deep of the political sermons and homilies of Lord Morley's personal friend, Mr. Gokhale. Was it to stop these that the proclamation of all India became necessary ?

It has been freely alleged that the prevalence of bombs and Terrorism in Bombay, Punjab and Bengal is the justification of the measure on the ground that open sedition leads to secret assassination, Nationalism to Terrorism. It is obvious that to attempt to meet secret conspiracy by prohibiting public agitation is a remedy open to the charge of absurdity. The secret conspirator rejoices in silence, the Terrorist find his opportunity in darkness. Is not the liberty of free speech and free writing denied to the Russian people by more rigorous penalties, a more effective espionage, a far more absolute police rule than any that can be attempted in India? Yet where do the bomb and the revolver, the Terrorist and the secret conspirator flourish more

than in Russia ? The conspirator has his its own means of propaganda which the law finds it difficult to touch. The argument, however, is that it is only in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction, disaffection and sedition that the propaganda of the conspirator can be effective, and Nationalism creates that atmosphere. Criticism of the Government leads to dissatisfaction with the Government, dissatisfaction leads to the aspiration for a better form of Government, aspiration of this kind when baulked leads to disaffection, disaffection leads to secret conspiracy and assassination. Therefore stop all means of criticising the Government and the first cause being removed, the final effect will disappear. That this is the actual train of reasoning, conscious or unconscious, in the minds of those who advise, initiate or approve a policy of repression is beyond doubt. It is evident in all they say or write.

Unfortunately the statement of the premises in this chain is incomplete and the conclusion is therefore vitiated. The first premise may be granted at once. In a country well satisfied with its lot, a nation at ease and aware of prosperity and progress, the propaganda of the secret conspirator must necessarily fail. In India itself, if we are to believe the *Times*, secret societies have existed for upwards of forty or fifty years. How is that they had no success and no one was aware of their existence until the reaction after Lord Ripon's regime culminated in the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon ? Dissatisfaction is not created by public criticism, it is created by the adverse facts on which public criticism fastens, and it crystallises either in public criticism or in secret discontent. The public criticism creates public agitation, the secret discontent creates secret conspiracy. Both are born of the same circumstances, but the lines of development are entirely different, nor is there much sympathy between them. The public agitator dreads the secret conspirator, the secret conspirator despises the public agitator, even when they are moving towards the same end. The man most detested and denounced by the Indian revolutionary organisations now active at Paris, Geneva and Berlin, is Sj. Bepin Chandra Pal, the prophet and first preacher of passive resistance. Yet the object of both is almost identical, the Nationalist agitator insisting on perfect autonomy, the revolutionist on separation, both being merely different forms of independence. The question for the autho-

rities is whether they will try to ignore or silence the public criticism or remove the cause of dissatisfaction. If they ignore without silencing public criticism, the dissatisfaction grows in volume until it becomes the aspiration for a better form of Government. They must then either satisfy that aspiration or silence it, they can no longer ignore it. This game of ignoring the obvious is, like the first crude attempt of Nationalism in India to ignore the Government, foredoomed to failure; it only postpones and intensifies the problem, it does not get rid of it. Yet this was the policy long followed by the Indian Government towards the Congress movement. On the other hand, they may silence the public criticism or trample on it. If they trample on it, the aspiration becomes disaffection not necessarily to the sovereign, but to the form and system of Government then obtaining, with a cry for absolute transformation. This was what happened in India in 1905. Trampling on public opinion without silencing its expression is mere madness; it leads to genesis of great revolutionary movements, injures the Government, endangers public peace and order, and helps nobody. This method does not even postpone the necessity of a solution, it hastens it by intensifying the problem to breaking point. Yet this was the policy of Lord Curzon. He not only permitted the expression of public discontent, but he fostered it by arguing with and trying to persuade it; yet he invariably trampled on the thing he permitted. It is a statesmanship of this kind which ruins empires and destroys great nations. There is another kind of policy, and that is to play with the monster of discontent, to chide it, whip it and yet throw its sops when taking advantage of the monster's preoccupation with the sop to win the chain round its neck tighter and tighter. This is also bad policy. The whip enrages, the sop does not soothe but irritates, the tightening of the chain only shortens the distance between the tamer and the brute;—for the difficulty is that, the tamer has to hold the chain, he cannot tie it to something else and get out of springing distance.

Eventually, either discontent has to be satisfied or silenced. If it is satisfied, the whole difficulty disappears and perfectly amicable relations are restored. That was the policy pursued by England with regard to its colonies after the severe lesson learned in America, with the result that the bond between the colonies and Great Britain still

defies the efforts of Time and Circumstance to loosen or snap them. But if discontent is not to be satisfied, the question then for the ruler is whether he prefers it to crystallize in public agitation and peaceful but possibly effective resistance, or in secret conspiracy, terrorism and eventually armed insurrection. It must be one of the two, for to expect an immense impulse like the national impulse to sink to rest without being either crushed or satisfied, is to expect impossible miracles. The Anglo-Indian appeal to the political leaders to be satisfied and cease from agitation is a singularly foolish and futile one. If the political leaders were to comply, even the most popular and trusted of them, they would cease to be leaders the next day. The dwindling numbers that attend the Convention sittings are a signal proof of this very obvious fact; that diminution has been effected, it must be remembered, without public agitation, without any organisation or activity of the Nationalist Party, by the mere operation of a law of Nature. The aspiration, however created, is there and it is a fire mounting out of the bowels of the earth, which no man's hand can extinguish. The political leaders know that they cannot quench it, if they would; the Government thinks it can. And the method it seems to favour, is the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act and the prosecutions of papers and publications or their leaders all over India....

If our view of the question is right, it is evident that to paralyse public agitation is to foster Terrorism, and we can only suppose that Government think Terrorism easier to deal with than public agitation. This seems to us a grievous error. If experience shows anything, it is that Terrorism is never extinguished except by the removal of its causes. The difference between Terrorism and open rebellion is that open rebellion often effects its object, but can easily be crushed, while Terrorism does not effect its object, but cannot be crushed. The only thing that Terrorism can do is to compel Government to satisfy partially the more moderate demands of peaceful agitation as the lesser of the two evils, and this is a result which the Terrorist looks on with contempt. He is always extreme and fanatical and will not be satisfied with anything less than immediate freedom gained by violence. He is confident of his result, he is passionately and intolerably attached to his method, Irish Terrorism only dis-

appeared because of the expectation of Home Rule by the alliance with British Liberalism ; Russian Terrorism is still kept alive by the impotence of the Duma ; Anarchism flourishes because the Governments of Europe have not found any way of circumventing it. Terrorism may perish of inanition ; coercion is its food and its fuel.

The policy now being followed by the Lord Minto's Government has neither immediate justification nor ultimate wisdom. It is the old futile round which reluctant authority has always trod when unable to reconcile itself to inevitable concession. It is a wasteful, ruinous and futile process. For if the Government were to declare tomorrow that it would no longer tolerate public opposition and deport all the leaders of public and peaceful agitation in the country, it would only stimulate more formidable and unscrupulous forces and substitute a violent, dangerous and agonising process for one which, even if a little painful, is helpful, economical and constructive.

THE VICEROY'S SPEECH

The speech of Lord Minto and the occasion of the first meeting of the Viceroy's Council under the new regime is a very important pronouncement ; and the most momentous of the passages in the pronouncement are two, the one in which he disposes finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Moderates, the other in which he threatens to dispose finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Nationalists. It has been a Moderate legend which still labours to survive, that the intention of Lords Morley and Minto in the Reforms was to lay the foundations of representative self-government in India. This legend was perseveringly reiterated in direct contradiction of the Secretary of State's famous pronouncement that, so far as his vision could pierce into the future, the personal and absolute element in Indian administration must forever remain. Lord Minto has now stamped his foot on the Moderate legend and crushed it into atoms. We quote the important passages in which he accomplishes this ruthless destruction.

"We have distinctly maintained that representative Govern-

ment in its Western sense is totally inapplicable to the Indian Empire and would be uncongenial to the traditions of Eastern populations—that Indian conditions do not admit of popular representation, that the safety and welfare of the country must depend on the supremacy of British administration—and that that supremacy can, *in no circumstances*, be delegated to any kind of representative assembly.... We have aimed at the reform and enlargement of our Council but not at the creation of Parliaments. I emphasise what I have just said in view of the opinions to which advanced Indian politicians appear not infrequently to commit themselves.”

In the face of speech so plain and uncompromising it will be difficult indeed to keep up the fiction that that it is only the regulations which are unobjectionable and, if only the regulations are changed, we can with a clear conscience accept and participate in the Reforms. The Act and the Regulations are not different in aim or parentage; they have one origin, one object, one policy. Lord Minto has emphatically stated that the initiative in the Reforms was from beginning to end his own, and the facts bear out the truth of his statement. His inaugural speech has put a seal of finality on the death doom of Moderatism of which the publication of the Council's rules was the pronouncement. The objective of Moderatism is colonial self-government, the means, the grace and good will of the British rulers, and the two British rulers whom they have hailed as apostles and fathers of Reform have declared explicitly that in no future age, however distant, and in no circumstances, however changed, can the official supremacy be delegated to any kind of representative assembly however safely constituted. Not even, therefore a Russian Duma, that simulacrum of a Parliament, is to be granted to India even in remote and millennial futurity.

The other passage is the reference to the licence of a revolutionary Press as a means of combating Terrorism. The revolutionary Press has long since disappeared and, therefore, we can only suppose that Lord Minto means the Nationalist Press and that this pronouncement heralds fresh coercive legislation. The platform has been silenced, the Press must follow. Then Thought alone will remain free from the prohibitions of the law and even that may be coerced by the deportation and exile of any one whom the Police may suspect of en-

tertaining liberal opinions. Just as the first quoted passage ensures the extinction of all Moderate activity, so this menace portends the extinction of all Nationalist activity. We do not know that we shall be altogether sorry. If *The Englishman* is tired of assassinations, we also are tired of the thankless and apparently unsuccessful task of regulating popular discontent and pointing out legitimate paths to the national aspiration on the one hand and attempting to save the officials from themselves on the other. We have only persevered in it on a strong sense of our duty to the country. But we are beginning to feel that Fate is more powerful than the strongest human effort. We feel the menace in the air from above and below and foresee the clash of iron and inexorable forces in whose collision all hope of a peaceful Nationalism will disappear, if not forever, yet for a long...

BUDDHA'S ASHES

Again the powers that behave committed a blunder. If any of the wise men who weave the tangled web of Anglo-Indian statesmanship at Simla, had a little common sense to salt their superior wisdom, they would never have allowed the strong feeling against the removal of Buddha's ashes to vent itself so long in public expression without an assurance at least of favourable consideration. We have waited long for that simple and natural act of statesmanship, but in vain. It is such a trivial matter in itself, concession would be so graceful, natural and easy; yet the harm done by perverseness and churlishness is so immense ! We wonder whether our official Governors ever think. It is very easy. What would they feel if the bones of a great Englishman, say, the Duke of Wellington, were so treated ! But diseased attachment to prestige and the reputation of an assured wisdom and an inflexible power have sealed up the eyes of those in high places.

TO MY COUNTRYMEN

Two decisive incidents have happened which make it compulsory on the Nationalist party to abandon their attitude of reserve and expectancy and once more assume their legitimate place in the struggle

for Indian liberties. The Reforms, so long trumpeted as the beginning of a new era of constitutional progress in India, have been thoroughly revealed to the public intelligence by the publication of the Council's Regulations and the results of the elections showing the inevitable nature and composition of the new Councils. The negotiations for the union of Moderates and Nationalists in an United Congress have failed owing to the insistence of the former on the Nationalists subscribing to a Moderate profession of faith.

The survival of Moderate politics in India depended on two factors, the genuineness and success of the promised Reforms and the use made by the Conventionists of the opportunity given then by the practical suppression of Nationalist public activity. The field was clear for them to establish the effectiveness of the Moderate policy and the living force of the Moderate party. Had the Reforms been a genuine initiation of constitutional progress, the Moderate tactics might have received some justification from events. Or had the Moderates given proof of the power of carrying on a robust and vigorous agitation for popular rights, their strength and vitality as a political force might have been established, even if their effectiveness had been disproved. The Reforms have shown that nothing can be expected from persistence in Moderate politics except retrogression, disappointment and humiliation. The experience of the last year has shown that, without the Nationalists at their back, the Moderates are impotent for opposition and robust agitation. The political life of India in their hands has languished and fallen silent.

By the incontrovertible logic of events it has appeared that the success and vigour of the great movement inaugurated in 1905 was due to the union of Moderate and Nationalist on the platform of self-help and passive resistance. It was in order to provide an opportunity for establishment of this union, broken at Surat, that the Nationalist gathered in force at Hughly in order to secure some basis and means of negotiation which might lead to united effort. The hand which we held out, has been rejected. The policy of Lord Morley has been to rally the Moderates and coerce the Nationalists; the policy of the Moderate party led by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Feroz Shah Mehta has been to play into the hands of that policy and give it free course and a chance of success. This

alliance has failed of its object; the beggerly reward the Moderates have received, has been confined to the smallest and least popular elements in that party. But the rejection of the alliance with their own countrymen by the insistence on creed and constitution shows that the Moderates mean to persist in their course even when all motive and political justification for it have disappeared. Discomfited and humiliated by the Government, they can still find no way to retrieve their position nor any clear and rational course to suggest to the Indian people whom they misled into a misunderstanding of the very limited promises held out by Lord Morley.

Separated from the great volume of Nationalist feeling in the country, wilfully shutting its doors to popularity and strength by the formation of electorates as close and limited as those of the Reformed Councils, self-doomed to persistence in a policy which has led to signal disaster, the Convention is destined to perish of inanition and popular indifference, dislike and opposition. If the Nationalists stand back any longer, either the National movement will disappear or the void created will be filled by a sinister and violent activity. Neither result can be tolerated by men desirous of their country's development and freedom.

The period of waiting is over. We have two things made clear to us, first, that the future of the nation is in our hands, and, secondly that from the Moderate party we can expect no cordial co-operation in building it. Whatever we do, we must do ourselves, in our own strength and courage. Let us then take up the work God has given us, like courageous, steadfast and patriotic men willing to sacrifice greatly and venture greatly because the mission also is great. If there are any unnerved by the fear of repression, let them stand aside. If there are any who think that by flattering Anglo-India or coquetting with English Liberalism they can dispense with the need of effort and the inevitibility of peril, let them stand aside. If there are any who are ready to be satisfied with mean gains or unsubstantial concessions, let them stand aside. But all who deserve the name of Nationalists, must now come forward and take up their burden.

The fear of the law is for those who break the law. Our aims are great and honourable, free from stain or reproach, our methods

are peaceful, though resolute and strenuous. We shall not break the law and, therefore, we need not fear the law. But if a corrupt police, unscrupulous officials or a partial judiciary make use of the honourable publicity of our political methods to harass the men who stand in front by illegal ukases, suborned and perjured evidence or unjust decisions, shall we shrink from the toll that we have to pay on our march to freedom ? Shall we cover behind a petty secrecy or a dishonourable inactivity ? We must have our associations, our organisations, our means of propaganda, and, if these are suppressed by arbitrary proclamations, we shall have done our duty by our motherland and not on us will rest any responsibility for the madness which crushes down open and lawful political activity in order to give a desperate and sullen nation into the hands of those fiercely enthusiastic and unscrupulous forces that have arisen among us inside and outside India. So long as any loophole is left for peaceful effort, we will not renounce this struggle. If the conditions are made difficult and almost impossible, can they be worse than those our countrymen have to contend against in the Transvaal ? Or shall we, the flower of Indian culture and education, show less capacity and self-devotion than the coolies and shopkeepers who are there rejoicing to suffer for the honour of their nation and the welfare of their community ?

What is it for which we strive ? The perfect self-fulfilment of India and the independence which is the condition of self-fulfilment are our ultimate goal. In the meanwhile such imperfect self-development and such incomplete self-government as are possible in less favourable circumstances, must be attained as a preliminary to the more distant realisation. What we seek is to evolve self-government either through our own institutions or through those provided for us by the law of the land. No such evolution is possible by the latter means without some measure of administrative control. We demand, therefore, not the monstrous and misbegotten scheme which has just been brought into being, but a measure of reform based upon those democratic principles which are ignored in Lord Morley's Reforms,—a literate electorate without distinction of creed, nationality or caste, freedom of election unhampered by exclusory clauses, an effective voice in legislation and finance and

some check upon an arbitrary executive. We demand also the gradual evolution of executive government out of the hands of the bureaucracy into those of the people. Until these demands are granted, we shall use the pressure of that refusal of co-operation which is termed passive resistance. We shall exercise that pressure within the limits allowed us by the law, but apart from that limitation the extent to which we shall use it, depends on expediency and the amount of resistance we have to overcome.

On our own side we have great and pressing problems to solve. National education languishes for want of moral stimulus, financial support, and emancipated brains keen and bold enough to grapple with the difficulties that hamper its organisation and progress. The movement of arbitration, successful in its inception, has been dropped as a result of repression. The Swadeshi Boycott movement still moves by its own impetus, but its forward march has no longer the rapidity and organised irresistibility of forceful purpose which once swept it forward. Social problems are facing upon us which we can no longer ignore. We must take up the organisation of knowledge in our country, neglected throughout the last century. We must free our social and economic development from the incubus of the litigious resort to the ruinously expensive British Courts. We must once more seek to push forward the movement toward economic self-sufficiency, industrial independence.

These are the objects for which we have to organise the national strength of India. On us falls the burden, in us alone there is the moral ardour, faith and readiness for sacrifice which can attempt and go far to accomplish the task. But the first requisite is the organisation of the Nationalist party. I invite that party in all the great centres of the country to take up the work and assist the leaders who will shortly meet to consider steps for the initiation of Nationalist activity. It is desirable to establish a Nationalist Council and hold a meeting of the body in March or April of the next year. It is necessary also to establish Nationalist Associations throughout the country when we have done this, we shall be able to formulate our programme and assume our proper place in the political life of India.

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

VII

Illusion and Delusion—the twin blocked the way;
This has confused the mind of Kanhu—
Where can he go and live ?
They who see with the mind stay away.
Three are there : although three, the three are one.
Kanhu says, the world is cut away from him—
Whoever that came has gone :
Because of this coming and going Kanhu is confused.
It is visible, the city of conquest is near to Kanhu.
Yet, Kanhu says, “it does not enter into my heart !”

NOTES

The goal is the city of God—the city of conquest for Kanhu. He must go there and live for ever. But with the active mind, with its illusions and delusions, none can enter. Illusion is to see a thing which is not there, delusion is to see one thing for another. They remain outside, Kanhu sees the world abolished for him, the three worlds of the mind, the life and the body which although three are really one—their truth is behind and beyond in the unity. That destination seems to be near and yet Kanhu has not completely entered into it.

VIII

The boat of Grace is filled with gold,
There is no reason for silver in it.
Kamali rows towards the heaven;
How is it then that the past life returns again ?
Pull out the peg, spread out the rigging;
Row on, Kamali, and ask of the true Guru.
Sit in the rear and look around.

The helm is not there ? How to ply and who can ply ?
Press evenly to the right and to the left as you go :
So do you find_in the way_the Great helpers.

NOTES

Through the supreme Grace your being carries only gold—pure consciousness. The impure, mixed worldly consciousness is the silverware—it must not be allowed to return. With this pure Consciousness firm in you, let yourself go ahead. Do not turn to the right, nor to the left—go forward keeping a watchful eye all around.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Contd.)

V. THE CRITIQUE OF THE SAMADHI-SOLUTION

The Voice replied : “Is this enough, O spirit ?
And what shall thy soul say when it wakes and knows
The work was left undone for which it came ?
Or is this all for thy being born on earth
Charged with a mandate from eternity,

*
**

To pass and leave unchanged the old dusty laws ?
Shall there be no new tables, no new Word,
No greater light come down upon the earth
Delivering her from her unconsciousness,
Man’s spirit from unalterable fate ?

*
**

Is this then the report that I must make,
My head bowed with shame before the Eternal’s seat,—
His power he kindled in thy body has failed,
His labourer returns, her task undone ?”
(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Bk. VII, C. II, p. 540)

“I am concerned with the earth, not with worlds beyond
for their own sake, it is a terrestrial realisation that
I seek and not a flight to distant summits.”
(*Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, p. 193)

TRANCE-experiences are undoubtedly of great value in the pursuit
of the spiritual goal as ordinarily understood, and the Nirvikalpa
Samadhi taken in the specific sense in which the term is used,

no doubt represents a supreme height of realisation that a seeker may aspire after. Naturally enough, this most elevated trance-state proves to be adequate if the goal is to pass away into the Superconscient and not to bring down the Power and Glory of the Superconscient into our normal waking consciousness. But samadhi experiences cannot suffice in the least for the object of our Yoga of Transformation; for, our goal is no less than the dynamic divinisation of our total existence including the outermost parts of Prakriti. To be more specific, viewed from the perspective of *our* spiritual goal—the goal of embodying and manifesting the highest spiritual consciousness here upon earth itself—the trance-solution for the actual imperfections of our world-existence suffers, among others, from the following deficiencies:

(1) The supreme trance-state represents a state of consciousness or rather superconsciousness to which only a rare few can ordinarily attain. Thus, it has got no general validity so far as the goal of a wide-based terrestrial realisation is concerned.

(2) Even when attained, there is no return for the majority of seekers from this supreme height of spiritual consciousness. It is only the exceptionally gifted Isvarakotis or “divine souls” who succeed in coming back to the waking state. (Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 499 :

“When once they (ordinary Sadhakas) somehow attain to the direct realisation of Brahman, they cannot again come back to the lower plane of material perception. They melt away in Brahman—*kṣīre nīravat*—like water in milk.”)

So the question of the divinisation of the waking existence becomes otiose and irrelevant.

(3) Traditionally it is averred that even those rare few who happen to return from the supreme state can do so only through the intermediary of a trace of ego and desires. Hence a certain “lowering of the key” becomes unavoidable which places it at a remove from the perfect divine realisation we aspire after.

Cf. Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VII :

“The conclusion of the Vedānta is that when there is absolute Samadhi and cessation of all modifications, there is no return from that state; as the Vedānta aphorism says: *anāvṛtti śavdāt*... But the Avatars cherish a few desires for the good of the world. By

taking hold of that thread they come down from the superconscious to the conscious state." (p. 140) [Italics ours]

Narrating his own personal experience the Swami says in the same context :

"I had just *a trace of the feeling of Ego, so I could again return to the world of relativity from the Samâdhi.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 139, [Italics ours])

(4) In a more general way we may state that if the entry into the higher reaches of our being is effected only in the absorbed super-conscious state of trance, the experience cannot become real to the whole being, being valid only for a remote part of it. Thus it militates against our goal of the complete spiritualisation of the totality of our existence.

(5) The Yogic trance helps us to fix the spiritual experiences in our inner consciousness alone; it cannot automatically lead to the spiritualisation of the outer waking consciousness. So for us who aim at a total spiritual and supramental change, even and in particular of the outer parts of our Nature, samadhi as an instrumentation proves to be altogether inadequate and futile.

(6) Because of the aforesaid inability to exercise anything but a relative and moderate elevating influence on the outer consciousness, it so happens that when the samadhi ceases, the thread is broken and the soul returns once again to the "distractions and imperfections of the outward life."

As a matter of fact, since one cannot continually remain in the trance-state,¹ while leading an embodied existence, *vyutthāna* or the "return" from the superconscious state becomes unavoidable, and with this *vyutthāna* "the lower consciousness from which the ascent took place falls back to what it was, with only the addition of an un-kept or a remembered but no longer dynamic experience."²

It is because of this persistence of the disabilities of the waking mentality even after attainment of samadhi that it is sometimes asserted that an absolute eradication of Ignorance or a complete ascen-

¹ Cf. "Yes, this Samadhi...is a state not at all easy to attain. When very rarely it appears in somebody, it does not last for long."

(Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VII, p. 112)

² Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 811.

sion of consciousness from the “mortal mentality” become feasible only when the body and the bodily life cease to function at death. (Cf. *Yoga-Shikhopanishad*, I.163: *piṇḍapātena yā muktiḥ sā muktirna tu hanyate*)

The foregoing discussion makes it clear that trance-experiences may be all right so far as the traditional Yogas are concerned; for, after all, according to them the true bondage is the very process of birth and the liability of the individual to rebirth in this “unhappy transient world” (*anityamasukhaṁ lokam*). Liberation achieved through the attainment of the knowledge of Reality should therefore have for its practical consequence the definitive stoppage of this cyclic process of birth-death-rebirth.

And if this is so, if the cessation from embodied existence is considered to be the *summum bonum*, one need concentrate only on an inner realisation of the inner Divine and not bother oneself with the possibility or otherwise of an integral terrestrial realisation. Also the body, although initially a necessary instrument for the realisation of our spiritual destiny (*śariramādyam khalu dharmasāadhanam*), may be allowed to disintegrate once that goal is achieved (Cf Sri Ramakrishna : “Take out the thorn with the help of a thorn” ; and *Yoga-Vasishtha* : “Renounce that with which you renounce” (*yena tyajasi tam tyaja*);

But this can by no means be our attitude to the body and bodily life. For the Integral Yoga has for its objective :

(i) to make spiritual experiences real to the whole consciousness including that of the outer being ;

(ii) to establish the highest possible realisation in the waking state and make it endure there ;

(iii) not only to experience the truth subjectively and in one’s inner consciousness alone, but to manifest it even in full activity ;

(iv) an integral possession of the integrality of the Divine in the life of this world and not only beyond it.

In short, in the words of Sri Aurobindo : “It is the object of my yoga to transform life by bringing down into it the Light, Power and Bliss of the Divine Truth and its dynamic certitudes. This Yoga is not a yoga of world-shunning ascetism, but of divine life....It aims at a change of life and existence, not as something

subordinate or incidental, but as a distinct and central object.”¹

Elsewhere Sri Aurobindo points out that “not only must the mind be able to rise in abnormal states out of itself into a higher consciousness, but its *waking mentality also must be entirely spiritualised.*”² (Italics ours.)

This then is our goal, and hence trance-experiences *alone* cannot help us much in achieving our objective. Moreover the samadhi state as ordinarily realised suffers from another great disability which may not be considered as such when viewed from the standpoint of the goal of the traditional world-shunning Yogas but certainly so from our point of view. This is as regards the absence of any conscious memory of the trance-experience when one returns to the waking mentality again.

As a matter of fact the aim of the old Yoga is to pass away into the Superconscious and not to bring back its dynamic riches to the waking outer existence with a view to effectuate a spiritual transformation there. Hence, as soon as the Yogin goes above the level of the spiritual mind, he does not seek to retain any continuity of awareness there; instead, he passes into the “mystic sleep” of Samadhi, a state of superconsciousness in which the human mind in its actually evolved condition cannot remain awake even with what has been termed the “inner waking” and hence passes into “the blank incomprehension and non-reception of slumber.”³ And as a result, because of the gulf of oblivion, the spiritual experiences, of the superconscious trance-state lose all their dynamic value for the waking consciousness.

But this disability has to be remedied. Since we seek to bring down the Superconscious into our normal waking consciousness, we must somehow bridge the gulf, heighten and intensify our spiritual awakening even in the normally superconscious reaches of being and train our consciousness to bring back in full the dynamic memory “from the inner to the outer waking.”

In this connection we feel tempted to reproduce *in extenso*

¹ *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, pp. 150, 166.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 453.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 599.

what the Mother said in reply to the question "Is the state of trance or Samadhi a sign of progress ?"¹

"To enter into Samadhi is to pass into a state of which no conscious memory remains on awakening.

"In ancient times this was considered as a very high condition. It was even thought that it was the sign of a great realisation. ...I have read in all kinds of so-called spiritual literature marvellous things about this state of trance or Samadhi ; and it happened that I had never had it. I did not know if it was a sign of inferiority. And when I arrived here [at Pondicherry], one of my first questions to Sri Aurobindo was, 'What do you think of Samadhi, this state of trance which one does not remember? One enters into a condition which seems to be blissful but when one comes out of it one never knows what happened.' He looked at me, he saw what I meant and told me, 'It is unconsciousness. ...Yes, one enters into what is called Samadhi, when one comes out of one's conscious being and enters into a part of one's being which is completely unconscious or rather into a domain where one has no corresponding consciousness—one goes beyond the field of one's consciousness and enters into a region where one has no more consciousness. One is in the impersonal state. That is to say, a state in which one is unconscious ; that is why naturally one remembers nothing, because one has not been conscious of anything'...

"So you have the reply. *The sign of progress is when there is no more unconsciousness, when you can rise to the same regions without entering into a trance.*" (Italics ours)

At the time of the publication of this Talk, the Mother added the following remark :

"There are people who enter into domains where they have a consciousness, but between this conscious state and their normal wakeful consciousness there is a *gap* : their individuality does not exist between the waking state and the deeper state; then *in the passage they forget*. They cannot carry the consciousness they had there into

¹ Vide *Bulletin of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, Vol. XIV, No 3, pp.43-45.

the consciousness here because there is a gap between the two. There is even an occult discipline which consists in building the intermediary fields, so that one may be able to remember things.”¹ [*Italics ours*].

But even this does not suffice for our goal. For what we aim at is not the conscious bringing back of the impressions, the reporting back to the waking consciousness, in transcriptions more or less perfect, what one experiences in states at present superconscious to it: we want instead an integral supramental transformation of the waking existence itself. In the luminous words of Sri Aurobindo :

“If the control of [the] highest spiritual being is to be brought into our waking life, there must be *a conscious heightening and widening* into immense ranges of new being, new consciousness, new potentialities of action, a taking up—as integral as possible—of our *present* being, consciousness, activities and a transmutation of them into divine values which would effect a transfiguration of human existence. For wherever a radical transition has to be made, there is always this triple movement—*ascent, widening of field and base, integration...*”² [*Italics ours*]

So we see that in order to have a divinely transformed waking existence, an ascension to the trance-state or even the building up of a conscious bridge between that and the waking state is not enough. Something much more revolutionary is needed : let us see what.

(*To be continued*)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

² *The Life Divine*, p. 657.

THE MARCH OF INDIA

V. INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND INSTITUTIONS :

ANCIENT INDIA

Functions of the State (I)

NOW that we have formed some idea of the limitations imposed by custom and public opinion on the powers of the state, we should examine in some detail the exact scope of the state's function in ancient India.

A slight confusion has been created in this matter by the attempt of modern scholars to read into some of the ancient texts and inscriptions certain ideas and institutions that savour of Western collectivism. Thus, it is generally held that Kautilya's *Arthashastra* advocates a thoroughgoing interference by the king and his officials in the day to day life of the people, and many look upon the so-called edicts of Asoka as an attempt on the part of a busybody to impose his arbitrary will on his subjects, in matters that had best be left alone. Asoka may be summarily dismissed as a freak. For all his zeal of a newly converted Buddhist, he managed in the end to lose his throne, apparently under public pressure, because he had been misusing state funds in making lavish donations to the Buddhist cause; this has been more than hinted at in the Buddhist tradition itself. And he left hardly an impress on later Indian history, whatever might have been his impact on the world-wide migration of Buddhism. As Sri Aurobindo had occasion to note (*The Ideal of Human Unity*, Chapter 31,) "Asoka's edicts remain graven upon pillar and rock, but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of a great people." Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is a different matter, and we shall have to consider its reputed "communistic" bias.

We have already indicated in the beginning that a characteristic feature of ancient Indian political thought was its emphasis on duties rather than rights. This comes out very clearly in its view of the state's

functions. From the earliest times we find long enumerations of the king's duties, very little being said about his rights *vis-à-vis* his subjects, except the obvious injunction that he should be respected and obeyed provided he is worthy of the honour. The position assigned to the state is best brought out by the dictum often repeated in the texts, that the king is a servant of the people and the taxes that he can levy are as it were his wages, for services rendered. A variant is provided by saying that the foremost duty of the king is to keep his subjects happy and contented. Kalidas the representative poet of the classical age probably does violence to grammar but is certainly reflecting a common notion, when he derives the word *rājan* from a root meaning "to please", *rājā prajā-rañjanāt*.

If we are to borrow a term from modern parlance to describe the attitude of the ancient Indian state to its subjects, "paternalism" seems to fit the case best, provided we understand this term in its best and not the derogatory sense often attached to it. The *Mahabharata*, for example, describes the king as the 'father of the people, because he has compassion for them (Shanti, 139.105). In the *Ramayana* (II.2.49), the hero is said to have behaved like a father when he sympathised with the sorrows of his people and was highly pleased when they were happy and joined in festivities. Kautilya (I.19) reflects the same sentiments when he says: "In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king, in their welfare his welfare." Yajnavalkya (I.334) exhorts the king to behave like a father towards his subjects. Even Asoka, the heretic king, declares in his inscriptions: "all men are my children".

Paternalism implied a number of things: protection from internal trouble and external danger, maintenance of law and order involving a regular and efficient system of police and justice, guardianship of the traditional Dharma and keeping the people on the path of virtue, help and support to the needy and infirm, prevention of economic exploitation and undue influence on the part of the men in positions of power, and a vigorous promotion of the general well-being of subjects. The aim in view was always to maintain the national culture at a high level and ensure the continued prosperity of the country, to the extent these could be secured with the help of the state power, and without in the least degree impairing the initiative

and efficiency of the individual and the diverse cultural, social, economic and religious groups of which he formed part.

The main lines of this endeavour were laid down at a fairly early date in the nation's history, in the period of the Upanishads to begin with, and in the Great Epics in full detail. A few quotations will illustrate the point. They are not meant to be exhaustive, but they may be taken as typical of the ancient Indian ideas on the functions of the state. In *Chandogya Upanishad* (V.115), King Aswapati the Kaikeya proudly declares : "Within my realm, there is no thief, no miser, no drunkard, none who does not keep the sacrificial fire, none who defies the social law and acts according to his self-will, no woman who goes astray." In the *Mahabharata* (Adiparva, chapter 109), there is a description of Bhishma's kingdom which elaborates the theme in these words : "Here there were no thieves, there was none who was sinful; the people were devoted to virtuous acts, sacrifices and the vow of the truth. Bearing love and affection for one another, they grew in prosperity. None was there miserly, and there was no woman who was a widow. The wells were full of water, the groves abounded in trees, and the whole kingdom was full of prosperity." This is one of the earliest examples in history of a conscious and deliberate attempt to paint a Utopia which was to be the model of a successfully governed state. There is in the *Mahabharata* (Sabha, chapter 5) another well-known passage that will bear repetition; the passage is long but a few typical extracts will serve to bring out the spirit in which the state in ancient India was intended to be run. It is in the form of certain questions which the divine sage, Narada, puts to Yudhishtira the Pandava prince who has just been installed as king. Some of these questions, if answered in the affirmative and with truthfulness by any of our contemporary Heads of states would do credit to their governments; presumably, the Pandava prince gave the correct answers but the answers have not been recorded. "Have your chief officers of states been really deserving the pay they receive", Narada asks. "And do they continue to be loyal to you ? You do not surely settle everything by yourself? And I trust the advice your ministers give does not leak out ? Do you get things done by officials who can be trusted to do their jobs well and who are incorruptible ? Your subjects are not surely oppressed by any severe measures taken

by you ? Do the people look upon you as an embodiment of impartiality, and can they come to you without fear as if you were their father and mother ? Are the peasants in your realm contented ? Are large tanks dug in your kingdom at proper distances, so that the farmers do not have to depend solely on the vagaries of the weather ? Are they ever in need of food or of seeds, and do you give them loans on easy terms ? Do you give your soldiers their pay and rations regularly at the appointed times ? Do you support the wives and children of those who have given their lives for your sake and those who are now in distress because of their army service ? Surely you reward by bestowing wealth and honours on men of learning and humility and on those who are skilled in the different branches of knowledge ? You no doubt protect yourself from your public servants, and protect them from your relatives, and protect all of them from one another ?” This last injunction is a real gem which many modern governments would be the better for copying.

It may be argued that all this was very well in theory. But is there any evidence in history,—for according to the accepted notions the Upanishads and the Great Epics belong to pre-history,—is there any independent testimony to show that even a remote attempt was made in ancient India to approach anywhere near the ideal ? We shall here omit the descriptions, given in Kalidas and the later poets of the classical age, of conditions prevailing in their time, although it is obvious to even a casual student of our literature that most of the great poets had been in closest touch with kings and courts and the common man, and the pictures they paint, however tinged with poetry and idealism, do reflect the contemporary scene. We shall also omit for our purpose the grandiloquent claims made by Asoka in his well-known inscriptions about the state of the country under his beneficent rule; for it may be justly objected that this self-styled “favourite of the gods” (*devānam priyā*) was too full of his own righteousness, like the Achemenid kings of ancient Iran whom he seems to have taken as his models, to be telling the whole truth. But the honest and scholarly Buddhist monks who came to India all the way from China in search of the true knowledge cannot be accused of any bias in favour of the peoples whom they happened to have visited in the course of their travels through India. And the pictures they

paint are singularly true to the ancient Indian ideal. Here is the impression that one gathers from Fa Hien : he travelled through India around 400 A.D. The quotations are from the useful summary given in Smith's *Early History of India*. "The picture", avers Smith, "is a pleasing one on the whole, and proves that Vikramaditya (this was the honorific title adopted by Chandragupta II during whose reign the Chinese pilgrim happened to be in India) was capable of bestowing on his people the benefits of orderly government in sufficient measure to allow them to grow rich in peace and prosper abundantly." This is high praise, coming as it does from a hardened Anglo-India bureaucrat who has very few good things to say about the ancient Indian ways of government. According to Fa Hien, Smith continues, "the towns of Magadha were the largest in the Gangetic plain. The people were rich and prosperous, and seemed to him to emulate each other in the practice of virtue. Charitable institutions were numerous; rest-houses for travellers were provided on the highways, and the capital (Pataliputra, modern Patna) possessed an excellent free hospital endowed by benevolent and educated citizens. Hither came, we are told, all poor or helpless patients suffering from all kinds of infirmities. They were well taken care of, and a doctor attended them, food and medicine being supplied according to their wants. Thus they were made quite comfortable, and when they were well, they might go away." This sounds very much like the modern welfare state which by many is considered to be an absolute novelty. "The region south of Mathura specially excited the admiration of the traveller. The large population lived happily under a sensible government which did not worry it overmuch. With a glance at Chinese institutions, Fa Hien congratulates the Indians that they had not to register their households, or attend to any magistrates and rules. They were not troubled with passport regulations, or, as the pilgrim bluntly puts it, 'those who want to go away, may go, those who want to stop may stop.' The administration of the criminal law seemed to him mild in comparison with the Chinese system. Most crimes were punished only by fines, varying in amount according to the gravity of the offence, and capital punishment would seem to have been unknown. Throughout the country, no one killed any living thing, or drank wine, ate onions or garlic; there were no butchers' shops or

distilleries in the market-places." This last portion of the pilgrim's report needs to be taken with a certain amount of scepticism. For we know from the literary works and the Ajanta paintings as well as from the law books that men were not exactly tee-totallers in fifth century India, they were not all harmless vegetarians as a Buddhist might expect them to be, and punishments could be harsh in case of need. But the general picture presented here tallies well enough with that given by the native records.

Hiuen Tsang, the other well-known pilgrim from China who has left a record of his impressions, visited India early in the 7th century, during the reign of Harshavardhana in the north and Pulkeshin the great Chalukyan king in the Deccan. He too wrote from the Buddhist standpoint, but the general impression he carried away with him was quite in keeping with his reverence for the Sacred Land. "He was favourably impressed", says Vincent Smith, "by the character of the civil administration, which he considered to be founded on benign principles. The officials were remunerated by grants of land; compulsory labour upon public works was paid for; taxes were light; the personal services exacted from the subject were moderate in amount; and liberal provision was made for charity to various religious institutions. Violent crime was rare. Imprisonment was now the ordinary penalty. The other punishments were more sanguinary than in the Gupta period. Minor offenses were visited with fines." This, as pointed out above, does not indicate a degeneration in the public morals, as Smith suggests; it merely shows that Hiuen Tsang was more observant than his predecessor. "Education evidently was diffused widely, especially among the Brahmins and numerous Buddhist monks; and learning was honoured by the Government. King Harsha was not only a liberal patron of literary merit, but was himself an accomplished calligraphist and an author of reputation. Benevolent institutions on the Asokan model, for the benefit of travellers, the poor and sick, were established throughout the empire. The king also imitated his prototype in the foundation of numerous religious establishments, devoted to the service of both the Hindu gods and the Buddhist ritual." It may be added in this connection that the glories of Nalanda University, which, like Oxford and Cambridge of a later date, had been founded as a centre of religious

training, began about this time and continued under the patronage of Harsha's successors in this region, especially the Pala kings of Bengal. Incidentally, Hiuen Tsang has left some details of the royal munificence which throw a light on the way grants-in-aid, a potent instrument in the hands of the modern state, used to operate in those remote days. Hiuen Tsang is describing here the way largesses were distributed by the king every five years at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna at Prayag. "By this time the accumulation of five years was exhausted. Except the horses, elephants and military accoutrements, which were necessary for maintaining order and protecting the royal estate, nothing remained. Besides these, the king freely gave away his gems and goods, his clothing and necklaces, earrings, bracelets, chaplets, neck-jewel and bright head-jewel; all these he freely gave without stint. All being given away, he begged from his sister an ordinary second-hand garment, and having put it on, he paid worship to the Buddhas of the ten regions, and rejoiced that his treasure had been bestowed in the field of religious merit."

The ancient ideals of government outlasted the fall of Hindu empire in northern India. But the same ideals continued to govern kings in the south. The testimony of foreign travellers in the Vijayanagara kingdom during the days of its glory, in the sixteenth century, is illuminating. We shall choose a few typical quotations from Domingos Paes, a Portuguese visitor from Goa who has left a detailed record of what he saw. He is one among many others who were impressed by the wealth and organisation of the Vijayanagara kingdom before it fell, and may serve our purpose. "These dominions are very well cultivated and very fertile....The land has plenty of rice and Indian corn, grains, beans and other kinds of crops which are not sown in our parts; also an infinity of cotton....The whole country is thickly populated with cities and towns and villages; the king allows them to be surrounded only with earthen walls for fear of their becoming too strong....This country wants water because it is very great and has few streams; they make lakes in which water collects when it rains, and thereby they maintain themselves." Of the capital city of Vijayanagara, Paes says, "This is the best provided city in the world and is stocked with provisions such as rice, wheat, etc., and there is large store of these and very cheap. The streets and markets are full of

laden oxen without count....Then the sheep they kill every day are countless, for in every street there are men who will sell you mutton so clean....The state of this city is not like that of any other city, for in this one everything abounds....There live in this many honourable merchants, and it is filled with a large population because the king induces many honourable merchants to go there from his cities and there is much water in it. The king made a tank there, and water comes to it from more than three leagues by pipes which run along the lower parts of the range of hills outside. This water is brought from a lake which itself overflows into a little river." All this sounds very modern indeed, and also the way the tank was built: "In order to make this tank the king broke down a hill which enclosed the ground now occupied by the tank. In the tank I saw so many people at work that there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand men. This tank the king portioned out amongst his captains (that is, officers), each of whom had the duty of seeing that the people placed under him did their work, and that the tank was finished and brought to completion." Ancient Indian states spent considerable amounts on maintaining a standing army, and Vijayanagara followed the old practice. As Paes observes, "this king has continually a million fighting troops, in which are included 33,000 cavalry in armour. All these are in his pay, and he has these troops always together and ready to be despatched to any quarter whenever such may be necessary....Should any one ask what revenues this king possesses, and what his treasure is that enables him to pay so many troops, I answer thus : These captains whom he has over these troops of his are the nobles of his kingdom; they are lords, and they hold the city and the villages of the kingdom (as fiefs). There are captains amongst them who have a revenue of a million and a million and a half, and as each one has revenue so the king fixes for him the number of troops he must maintain, in foot, horse and elephants....Each of these captains labours to turn out the best troops he can get, because he pays them their salaries....I did not see a man (among these troops) that would act the coward." This again was very much in the old Indian tradition; for we must not forget that India lost her battles against the foreigner not because the soldiers were cowards, but because their equipment had not kept march with the times, and also because in the crucial stages, they were invariably let

down by their leaders and kings. These kings were in the habit of maintaining a full treasury which they kept on filling from generation to generation, thus incidentally providing an adequate incentive to hungry adventurers from abroad. So Paes goes on to add, "The previous kings of this place for many years past have held it a custom to maintain a treasury, which treasury, after the death of each, is kept locked and sealed in such a way that it cannot be seen by any one, nor opened. They are not opened except when the kings have great need, and thus the kingdom has great supplies to meet its needs...." We notice however a certain deterioration in the matter of giving punishments, although here too, precedents could be found in the code of Kautilya who wrote in the 4th century B.C. Another Portuguese traveller, Fernando Nuniz records : "The punishments that they inflict in this kingdom are these : for a thief, they cut off a foot and a hand.... Nobles who become traitors are sent to be impaled alive; and people of the lower orders, for whatever crime they commit, he forthwith commands to cut off their heads in the market-place." Brahmins no doubt were treated less harshly than the others, for as Nuniz says, "in this country they do not put Brahmins to death but only inflict some punishment so that they remain alive." Nevertheless, the state never hesitated to make its power felt, and we may accept the foreign traveller's picturesque verdict : "The people are so subject to the king that if you told a man on the part of the king that he must stand still in a street holding a stone on his back all day till you released him, he would do it."

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All this points to one conclusion, namely, that the state in ancient and medieval Hindu India was not a powerless entity. It was quite capable of giving protection to its subjects against misrule, and oppression by its own servants as well as by the anti-social elements among the general public. It was sufficiently strong, or at least took adequate precautions that foreign attacks would be met. Above all, it tried to ensure a decent standard of living for all its subjects by engaging in a number of welfare activities which many modern states even now hesitate to undertake under the pretext of *laissez-faire*. The doctrine

of *laissez-faire* obtained in ancient India as well, but it was not misinterpreted and misused, except in one or two glaring instances, to keep the down-trodden under foot forever. Of all these points we shall take note in the sequel.

(To be continued)

SANAT K. BANERJI

THE LIFE DIVINE

(BRIEF SUMMARY)

CHAPTER XXIV

MATTER

LIFE and Mind are in the fact of evolution conditioned by the body and therefore by the principle of Matter. The body is the chief difficulty in the way of spiritual transformation of life; it has therefore been regarded by spiritual aspiration as an enemy and the escape from the material existence has been made an indispensable condition of the final emancipation.

The quarrel begins with the struggle between Life and Matter with the apparent defeat of life in death as its constant circumstance; it continues with the struggle of Mind against the life and body and culminates with the struggle of the spirit against all its instruments; but the right end and solution of these discords is not an escape and a severance but the complete victory of the higher over the lower.

We have to examine the problem of the reality of Matter. Our present experience of Matter does not give us its truth; for Matter is only an appearance of the Reality, a form of its force-action presented to the principle of sense in the universal consciousness. As Mind is only a final dividing action of Supermind and Life of Conscious-Force working in the conditions of the Ignorance, so Matter as we know it is only the final form taken by conscious-being as the result of that same working. Mind precipitating itself into Life to create form gives to the universal principle of Being the appearance of material substance instead of pure substance, that is to say, of substance offering itself to the contact of mind as stable thing or object. This contact of mind with its object is Sense.

In the divine Mind there is a movement which presents to the divine Knower the forms of Himself as objects of His knowledge and this would create a division between the Knower and the object of

knowledge if there were not at the same time, inevitable, another movement by which He feels the object as Himself. This movement, in the divided state of existence created by dividing Mind, is represented to us as the contact of sense which becomes a basis for contact through the thought-mind by which we return towards unity.

Since the action of Mind is to divide infinitely the one infinite existence, Matter, the result of that action, becomes in its apparent nature an infinite atomic division and atomic aggregation of infinite substance. But its reality is one and indivisible, even as in the reality of Life and of Mind, Matter is Sachchidananda represented to His own mental experience as a formal basis of objective knowledge, action and delight.

CHAP XXV

THE KNOT OF MATTER

Spirit and Matter are the two ends of a unity, Spirit the soul and reality of Matter, Matter the form and body of Spirit. There is an ascending series of substance and Spirit at the summit is itself pure substance of being. Brahman is the sole material as well as the sole cause of the universe and matter also is Brahman ; it is like Life, Mind and Supermind, a mode of the eternal Sachchidananda.

Stoll, practically, Matter seems to be cut off from Spirit and even its opposite and the material existence incompatible therefore with the spiritual. Matter is the culmination of the principle of Ignorance in which Consciousness has lost and forgotten itself and the self-luminous Spirit is represented by a brute insciant Force in whose mere action there appears to be no self-knowledge, mind or heart. In this huge no-mind Mind emerges and has to labour besieged and limited by the universal Ignorance and in this heartless Inconscience a heart has manifested which has to aspire opposed and corrupted by the brutality of material Force. This is the form-absorbed Consciousness returning progressively to itself, but obliged to work under the conditions of Matter, that is to say, always bound and limited in its results.

For Matter is the opposite of the spirit's freedom and mastery, the culmination of bondage ; it is a huge force of movement, but of inertly driven movement subject to a law of which it has no conscience nor initiative but mechanically obeys. It opposes therefore to the attempt of Life to impose itself and freely utilise and the attempt of Mind to impose itself and know and freely guide and constant opposition of its inertia; it yields reluctantly to a certain extent, but brings always in the end a definite denial, limit and obstruction. For this reason knowledge, power, love, etc. are always pursued, accompanied and hedged in by their opposites.

For Matter is the culmination of the principle of division and struggle. It can only unify by an association which carries with it the possibility of dissociation and an assimilation which devours. Therefore Life and Mind in Matter working under this law of division and struggle, that is to say, of death, desire and limitation, aggregation and subsequent dissociation, labour without any finality or certainty of assured progress.

But especially the divisions of Matter bring in the law of pain. Ignorance and Inertia would not be necessarily a cause of pain if the Mind and Life were not aware of an infinite consciousness, Light and Power in which they live but are prevented from participating by the Ignorance and Inertia of Matter or were not stirred to possess this wideness partly or wholly. Man especially, because he is most self-conscious, develops this awareness to a high degree, nor can he be permanently satisfied with increase of power or knowledge within the limits of the material world, for that is also limited and inconclusive and, being aware of and impelled by the infinite, within and around him, he cannot escape the necessity of seeking to know and possess it. This progression of the conscious being out of the Inconscient to the infinite consciousness might be a happy outflowering but for the principle of rigid division and imprisonment of each divided being in his own ego which imposes the law of struggle, the dualities of attraction and repulsion, pleasure and pain, effort and failure, action and reaction, satisfaction and dissatisfaction. All this is the denial of Ananda and implies, if the negation be insuperable, the futility of existence; for in this existence the satisfaction sought by the Infinite in the finite cannot be found, then

ultimately it must be abandoned as an error and failure.

This is the basis of the pessimist theory of material existence which supposes Matter to be the form and Mind the cause of the universe and both of these to be eternally subject to limitation and ignorance. But if on the contrary it is immortal and infinite Spirit which has veiled itself in Matter and is emerging, the development of a liberated supramental being which shall impose on Mind, Life and Matter a higher law than that of limitation and division, is the inevitable conclusion from the nature of cosmic existence. There is no reason why such a being should not liberate and make divine the physical existence as well as the mind and life, unless our present view of Matter represents the sole possible relation here between sense and its objects in which case, indeed, fulfilment must be sought only in worlds beyond. But there are other states even of Matter and ascending series of the gradations of substance, and their higher law is possible to the material being because it is there in it already latent and potential.

(To be continued)

SRI AUROBINDO

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

WE have seen that the service of humanity, in whatever form it is done, fails to contribute to the happiness either of the person who does it or of those for whom it is done. For real happiness, happiness which each one of us hankers after, cannot be brought about simply by material or mental means. It is certainly true that one has a birth-right to be happy, and that one's desire for happiness is quite a legitimate desire ; for utter happiness is the inevitable destiny of all. But we have to see what happiness one secretly longs for, what is its nature, and how it can be achieved. But before we take up that point, we have to answer a question we have already posed ourselves : Can service of humanity lead to the elimination of one's ego and its selfish motives ?

There is a lot of loose talk about one's being selfless in social, political or humanitarian work. We often hear of a social or humanitarian worker being universally eulogised as selfless. Well, if that were true, all these workers would be liberated souls. No spiritual discipline would then be needed for liberation. But spiritual wisdom asserts that the little, petty self of man which feels itself separate from others is the cause of his ignorance and bondage. Liberation, according to it, is the expansion of one's consciousness into the infinite consciousness and the transfer of one's centre of gravity from the mortal lump of thinking clay one is at present to the eternal and immortal Being or Self-existence. That was the selflessness to which the Buddha and others attained by so much self-discipline and concentration. But service of humanity, if the truth has to be faced squarely, enhances rather than diminishes egoism and renders one's self more subtly, more pervasively, more complacently selfish.¹ Of course, it is not the crude, narrow, repulsive selfishness of a man who makes no bones of inflicting privation or suffering on others in order to serve his own ends. It is the refined,

¹ "Very usually, altruism is only the sublimest form of selfishness."—Sri Aurobindo

sophisticated, wide-horized, ethics-coated selfishness of the idealist or the philanthropist who inflicts his own ideas and principles, his own views and plans and programmes upon others and insists on their adoption as the panacea for most ills of life. The infliction is done out of kindness and compassion, out of an earnest solicitude for the happiness and well-being of others, out of a deep sense of fellow-feeling. It is considered a laudable infliction to which humanity is expected to submit with a good grace. But the idealist or the philanthropist seems to be blissfully unaware of the fact that his mental views and moral principles are all ignorant and erring, deriving, as they do from his half-lit mind, and that to impose them on others whose line of evolution he cannot see, is to throw their nature out of gear and hinder rather than help their progress.¹ This is nothing but ambition—that disguised ambition of the presumptuous human mind to lead the world by the nose to the Kingdom of Heaven or the Utopia of which it has itself no direct and definite knowledge. “How do you propose to help humanity ? You do not even know what it needs,” asks the Mother. The humanist does not bother about the true need of humanity, and even if he did, he could not know it ; for it takes the insight of a spiritual man to discover it. What he considers to be its need, must be its need. The humanist helps, because he must, because without it his own life will lose its savour. He imposes his will upon others, cripples their initiative, bends their spirit of independence to his dominating will and congratulates himself that it is not for himself but for others that he is sacrificing his time and energy and money. It is a glorious sacrifice, and he is secretly, often subconsciously, proud of it.

“How can you help another if you do not have a consciousness higher than his ?”, asks the Mother again. But the consciousness of others is no concern of the philanthropist. It does not deter him or damp his ardour if he finds that the person he is going to help has a consciousness higher than his. Is it not his mission to help the lame dogs over the stile, irrespective of their consciousness ?

¹ “Selfishness kills the soul ; destroy it. But take care that your altruism does not kill the souls of others.”—Sri Aurobindo

"It is only children who say, 'I am opening a dormitory, I am going to build a nursery, I will offer soup to the poor, preach knowledge, spread a religion etc....It is only because you consider you are better than others, that you know better than they what they should be or do...' The whole secret of this kind of humanitarian drive is the truth that 'you consider you are better than others.'"

"I do not think that humanity has become happier or that there has been a great improvement." The humanist gets a satisfaction from the feeling that "he is something" and that he is doing something well worth doing.

The Mother tells us of a wit who once said, "...If mankind had no suffering, philanthropists would be left without occupation." One can, indeed, well imagine the fret and uneasiness of the philanthropist if he is told that he had better stop meddling with others' affairs and tinkering at social reforms. His ambition masquerades as altruism and philanthropy but he knows it not. "Altruism," says Sri Aurobindo, "does the works of compassion more often for its own sake than for the sake of the world it helps." "Altruism, philanthropy, the service of mankind are in themselves mental or moral ideals, not laws of the spiritual life," Sri Aurobindo says again. The humanist is shocked and alarmed to hear it.

It is clear then that service of humanity is not a royal road to selflessness or liberation from the ego. Rather the contrary. The ego in man battens on its self-righteous humanitarian activities which appear glorified in the eyes of the world. Human evolution has reached a stage where it has become necessary to draw a clear line between mental tentatives and spiritual imperatives, between provisional palliatives and a radical therapy. Man must get beyond his ego and come in contact with the hidden springs of universal action, if he aspires to do real good to the world. Mental sympathy and fellow-feeling will not avail much. Knowledge alone with its inherent power can save the world. The One alone can save the Many.

(To be continued)

LET US RECONSIDER EDUCATION

(continued)

WE must distinguish spirituality from morality and religion. Morality is an attempt to control, to guide and to direct our motives, seekings, impulses, desires, our life-force, by a mental standard of conduct. That it is a mental or a rational attempt is shown by the fact that the various standards of conduct are arrived at either by the calculations of consequences of action or by erecting a uniform law of some inner motive or intuition or conscience declared to be valid for all. The inadequacy of these moral standards has become too obvious in our day, and there seems to be hardly any way of formulating a stable moral theory. As in Thought, so in Morality there is a disequilibrium. If we examine the ethical situations, we find that they call for a unitary consciousness to deal with them ; and this unitary consciousness is precisely not obtained at the mental level. There is, we may affirm, above moral consciousness, a higher spiritual consciousness, intrinsically aware of the unity ; it is this automatic awareness of the unity that would resolve the moral state of disequilibrium. An action proceeding spontaneously and effectively from an intrinsic unity-consciousness, that is the hall-mark of spirituality. Moral education, that is, morals instilled by mental considerations, may be necessary so long as humanity has not felt the need to pass beyond the mental consciousness ; one may justify the instilling of the guilt consciousness among men by showing how successful it is in checking the ruthlessness and wildness of Man, but true spirituality shows that it is like administering sickness to man to check the outer signs of some other sickness. In an ideal system of spiritual education, the harmony of life would be induced, not by moral principles, but by a wise channelising of energy, and in fact, by an effective elimination of the moral problems altogether. Life can directly be guided by the Spirit ; morality need not enter, even as an intermediate step.

Similar remarks apply to religion as well. Religion is not spirituality. Religion is also a mental way of leading Man to some kind of relationship with the Spirit. The underlying assumption of Religion is that by certain specific acts, by certain rituals, ceremonies, certain confessions, certain prayers, a relationship can be established with what is believed to be the highest Being or Beings. True spirituality shows, on the contrary, a plastic path, an open way, recognising for each individual a unique path leading him to develop a growing and living relationship and identity with the supreme Reality. Spirituality is a matter of inner life, dependent upon no external binding of rituals or ceremonies; in the words of Sri Aurobindo : "spirituality is in essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul, which is other than our mind, life and body; an inner aspiration to know, feel, to be that, to enter into contact with the greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe which inhabits also our own being, to be in communion with It and union with It, and a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming or new being, a new self, a new nature." The path of Yoga is the path of the Yogi, the Rishi, the Sufi, the mystic. There are dogmatic religions which negate this path. To these dogmatic negations, our reply is that as they are by definition above argument, we shall leave them where they are, and let those who want them have them, but we shall refuse to ourselves the privilege of the dogmatic blindness. Our concern is with light and illumination, and if any given religion has within its heart this element of light, the truth of spiritual growth, we shall accept it, not in a religious spirit, but in the yogic spirit, the spirit of sincere seeking, and in the spirit of the widest seeking, the seeking of the Infinite.

Yoga or spirituality is very much associated with the idea of the renunciation of the world and dynamic action. This association is due to an extreme tendency of asceticism based upon a certain truth of the nature of the Spirit. The truth behind asceticism is that it demonstrates that the Spirit is prior to and above the movement. But this truth is evidently partial, for even though Spirit is above movement, the movement is not devoid of Spirit; indeed, both reason and spiritual experience affirm that all movement has its origin and

source in the Spirit. In the original spiritual tradition of India, there was no opposition between the Spirit and the world; the Vedic and the Upanishadic Culture was not world-negating, and this culture, in fact, supplied the inspiration and basic bedrock for all the multifarious developments in the dynamic pursuits of the body, life and mind. It is wrong to suppose that the spirituality of India has been the cause of the poverty and misery of India; it was when spirituality became insufficiently spiritual, that is to say, partial in its movement and field of effort and achievement, that the seeds of its weaknesses were sown. This defective notion of spirituality has rightly been rejected by the spiritual pioneers of the modern Indian Renaissance. Dayananda stands out as a robust spiritual pioneer who boldly and confidently expounds dynamism as the truth of the Spirit and condemns with full force the theory and practice of world-negating Illusionism. In Sri Ramakrishna, we find a profound and wide and synthetic spiritual experience making way for the solid new foundation for the dynamic spiritual action. Vivekananda is for us the very embodiment of dynamism expressing the fire and passion of the Spirit; and all the truths and dynamic powers of the Spirit we find manifesting sovereignly and triumphantly in Sri Aurobindo. Spirituality finds its complete fulfilment in the sovereign embodiment in Matter and the most effective expression in Life.* The divine life on earth, not an escape to an indifferent Nirvana or to a distant heaven of bliss, that is the great message of the Indian spirituality.

Life, it has been argued, is basically ignorant, and like a dog's tail, its curl towards corruption is irremediable. And yet, the defiant spirit of Man has throughout the centuries attempted to fathom, manipulate and change this very principle of existence. Religion, Morality, Culture, Polity, Economy, are so many ways by which attempts are made to churn the mysterious waters of Life so that it may deliver from its bosom something that is still so elusive and still promises to be perhaps the sweetest nectar. If these attempts have failed, the reason is that the secret of Life and Matter is not accessible to the Mind of which Religion, Morality, and Culture etc., are so many dynamic expressions. Mind is incapable of penetrating into the heart of Life and the message of our new spirituality is that it is the Spirit and its Supreme Power which alone can achieve what seems to be an

impossibility. There is, as we can discover through Yoga, behind our blind, impulsive, headstrong desire-soul, a true vital being, pure, calm, powerful and spontaneously turned to the inner and the higher Self, which we can bring forth and manifest in our surface activities the pure but powerful Hanumana. There is again, behind the true vital being, our true individual central being, pure and sweet and fragrant white flame, projecting into our outer being, and capable of suffusing all our life-activities with its nobility, sheer purity and devotion, and with the divine potency that can lead from the complicated cobwebs and snares of Ignorance into the highest sublimity, wideness and intensity of knowledge, action and delight. Not by fleeing from life, nor by accepting life as it is, but by a progressive discovery of the inner truth of life and its problems, and by an inner and delicate but effective change of the very vibrations of life-force that we can avoid the extremes of either killing and rejecting life or of drinking to death the sweet-bitter brew of life.

The West that is coming to us through Commerce, Politics, Culture or through Education, is full of a dynamism of Life; Life that is highly exploited, Life that is highly organised, Life that is highly and subtly mechanised. It is in a mad rush, and starting from the early Renaissance when it was liberated from the clutches of religion and religious morality, it has coursed through a finesse of equally liberated philosophy, literature and art, but has arrived now at a bottom point of a nude revelation of its unbridled phantasy and violence. It is as though by the blind but sure eye that it invades India and it could be the privilege of India to offer to it the real spiritual tranquilliser to liberate it from the pain that it carries within its bosom. It is in fact, a necessity on the part of India to discover the spiritual remedy that she inwardly has if she has to survive. For the only way in which India can receive the rush of life is by its majestic spiritual embrace; else, India will remain troubled and unequal to the task. India must be dynamic, but spiritually dynamic.

Spirituality and world-action are not incompatible with each other. On the contrary, since the Spirit is an all-embracing Reality and Power, the most effective world-action can proceed only on the spiritual basis. Caesar and Christ are not opposed to each other; only Christ has to apply himself to the works of Caesar. And we shall

then see that Christ will out-Caesar Caesar.

A perception of world-unity and an automatic action contributing to the world-unity would be the natural outcome of spirituality applying itself to the works of Life-Force. Internationalism which is being imposed on the humanity through world-ideologies, commerce, communications and political drives, is in its truest reality an expression of the spiritual consciousness and therefore it is native to the spiritual man. A progressive harmony of the individual, national and international relations is a natural law of spiritual action. The world-unity can ultimately be achieved and made secure only on the spiritual basis.

We speak today of the need of the unity of our country. But not knowing the fundamental truth of this unity, recommendations are made which are purely external and linguistic in their nature. The unity of India is spiritual, and once we recognise this truth, proclaim it, and act in the light of this inner unity, we can be sure we shall not have to go to external means to achieve the unity. It will simply be there.

Spiritual action is not a duty for duty's sake; spiritual action is not devoid of the mirth and joy and the shining laughter of the Life-Force. There is in the Life-Force a puissant will in the realisation of which is the ineffable joy and ecstasy. The idea of duty belongs to the moral plane, and duties often conflict with each other, and the justice sought after through the mental consciousness turns out to be a supreme injustice; and how often love abhors what duty demands ! This situation of conflict and disequilibrium does not belong to the spiritual consciousness. In Spirit there is inherent delight and in spiritual action there is a harmonious perception of unity which places each relation in its proper place and extracts from each shock of meeting the utmost Rasa, the sap of delight. Out of this delight or of the upward movement leading up to this delight can be born the highest forms of literature and art. The marvel of form is essentially the marvel of the presence of the Spirit. For this reason, then, the most marvellous forms of beauty can be the effortless and inevitable expressions of spiritual consciousness alone. An unfailing rush of the waves of joy and love pour out of the bosom that has opened its gates to the indwelling Spirit,

Such a downpour of love, expressing itself in various relations, mutualities, formations, in the varied play of life, such a truth of dynamic spirituality basing itself on the eternal Repose of the Silence must form the very pulse of the new education. The Education Commission speaks of the close connection between life and education. And this is the right perception. There are sermons in stones, Nature itself is an open book widely spread before us, life itself is the great teacher of life. But we have seen that life as it is, has a drive, but it needs to be illumined; education is the process of releasing the light and the force of Light that are in the heart of Life, so that it becomes concentrated and richly and subtly organised; and life so organised will be an unfailing and sure guide of life; life so organised quickens and sensitises our instruments to be in tune with the stone, insect, beast, man and woman, with the all-pervading Spirit itself.

Evidently, therefore, the method of spiritual education will have a foundation and spirit quite different from what is current in the ordinary systems of education. The pulsation that we seek in the educational process, the soul that we wish to implant in education, cannot be born of any external manipulation of organisation; the method of spiritual education is fundamentally that of constant fusion in the atmosphere of the spiritual experience, spiritual knowledge, spiritual force, the purifying force, the liberating and uplifting force. There must vibrate a constant idea of the Spirit, and there must be a constant meditation on the Spirit through each act; each activity of education must be directed to provide in it the presence and revelation of the dynamic Will of the Spirit. There must course through the whole educational process a wide understanding of the complex and varied ways through which the Spirit manifests itself in Nature and in Man; there must be correspondingly wise handling of the temperaments, possibilities and imperatives of the delicate natures that are entrusted to our care; there must be an insistence on the culture of the mind, emotions and the body, knowing full well that it is through the refinement, vigour, richness and perfection of these instruments that the Spirit can dynamically effectuate itself in the world; there must be an understanding of the various stages and principles of evolution of Nature and the understanding that each stage has its own norms and standards and that they have to

be organised on a vast and complex scale of values, all leading in their large movements as well as in detail to the consummation and realisation of the highest values moved by an intrinsic consciousness of the unity and oneness; there must be wideness, charity, even indulgence, sympathy, affection, love in relationships; every field of knowledge and art should find its proper place, each one contributing to the harmony and essential oneness; reading, conversation, study, casual or organised, pertaining to spiritual matters will have their place; even instruction too will have its legitimate place; but more important will be the methods of example and influence. The method of spiritual education is the method of life itself; it is the active and mutual participation of teachers and students in their spiritual and integral development. This is the heart and soul and method of education.

But it may be objected that this goal of education, even if desirable, is extremely difficult to realise. But in reply, we have to insist on the necessity of its realisation. Science demands it, Life demands it, the Spirit of India itself demands it. Without it, we shall be swept off our feet. We shall, therefore, not desist from the utmost effort that is demanded of us. Indeed, it is the realisation of this ideal of education that will mean the revolution in education.

The logic of the new educational methodology itself will call for a spiritual orientation in education. The modern educationist is truly in search of the soul of the child. He has come to realise that the child is not a plastic material to be moulded and pressed into a shape desired and decided upon by the parents or the educators. A psychology of freedom in education has gained a great ground. The idea that the education is the education of the whole personality has begun to find its practical application in many advanced schools. The idea of psychological counselling has also gained ground; the Education Commission itself has recommended the appointment of counsellors in schools and colleges. The demand for work-experience in education has become insistent, and one of the chief recommendations of the Education Commission is to introduce work-experience as an integral part of education. All these ideas and recommendations and practices bear in themselves the seeds for a great psychological explosion. For the present psychological ideas are the first crude beginnings and very largely they are derived from Beha-

viourism or from the Analytic or Gestalt or Hormic Psychology. These schools themselves are in conflict with each other and create by this conflict a disequilibrium which must inevitably lead to its own correction. But if we inquire into the nature of this conflict, we shall find that it is rooted in the hiatus of experience, the incompleteness of data ; the present data that we have are capable of being interpreted in several alternative ways, and we are not in a possession of those crucial data which would settle this quarrel. This would mean an exploration of the as-yet unexplored or ill-explored regions of consciousness which, however, have been the central field of yogic psychology. We have or can have in the yogic psychology a complete science of personality which is the key-concept for education. Personality is sometimes identified with character, but very often a distinction is made between the two; according to this distinction, character means the fixed structure of certain recognisable qualities while personality means the flux of self-expressive or sensitive and responsive being. But when we examine the distinction between the fixed structure and the flux, we find that the fixity and the flux are only relative terms, and in the movement of Nature, nothing is fixed. Personality then is a plastic expression of certain forces of Nature combined for the time being. Yoga affirms that this combination of forces can be disturbed; it can be modified, it can be totally changed. Personalities can be multiplied within the same individual; the conflicting personalities in the individual can be harmonised; one can become capable of putting forth the needed personality according to the circumstances or the demand of the work or the situation, even while the other personalities would remain behind contributing to the efficacy of the personality put in the front. One can even go beyond all personality and know the real Person that assumes so many personalities, and even beyond this there are still many more discoveries that await us. All this the educational methodology will be obliged to admit in due course, and in fact, imminently if we truly understand how accelerated is the modern pace of progress.

But above all, it is the evolutionary force working in the world that seems to confirm our hope of a sooner change that must overcome mankind and turn it inwards towards the discovery of the inner realities. There are, we might say, three fundamental operative

principles of evolution; first, a wide, subtle and complex organisation of the forms of the present term of evolution; next, an ascent of this into a higher term; and third, an assimilation of the lower by the higher. In the present complex and subtle organisation, we have the evidence of the imminent ascent of consciousness to what is above our present term of mentality. That which is above mentality should assume a most important subject of our inquiry both in the Universities and outside. For in this great movement of evolution, we are all equal partners; and the evolutionary force cannot be stayed by any dogma, doubt or obscurantism or denial. It is a cosmic necessity, and it is, therefore, wise to accept the meaning of this necessity, and prepare ourselves, to take the staff in our hands and to set out for the journey.

This evolutionary ideal can be a most satisfying goal that we can put forward before our youth. The realisation of this goal will demand from the youth a total consummation of his energy and the fire of his idealism. Not to be a mere citizen of the country or of the world, but to prepare a new world, to transcend the limitations of Man and to shape him into a new being, to evolve a new species,—let this be the project, the work-experience in our student's educational programme. This will prove indeed the project of their life itself.

The spiritual heritage of India is a most favourable circumstance for the project that we are presenting. The spiritual history of India reveals a logical development of the Spirit in the Intuitive Mind in the Upanishadic Age, of the Spirit in the Pure Mind in the Philosophic Age, of the Spirit in Life-Force in the age of the Purana, the Purana, Tantra, and the Bhakti and the later Bhakti Age. This movement would have found its completion in the development of the Spirit in Matter, but for the period of darkness and confusion that overcame India at a period of the exhaustion of the national life-force. But at the same time, when we are now renascent, we can continue from where we had left, and take the help of the fruits of the past spiritual labour and by a fresh effort, even if it be revolutionary, we can push forward, and fulfil the real role of India. The present national and international problems demand from us precisely that very thing which India as a spiritual laboratory has

still left undone, namely, the reconciliation of Spirit with the material life. This is the challenge for India : in rejecting it is the ruin of the nation ; in accepting and meeting it, we shall find ourselves and find our right place in the comity of nations.

It is fitting that at this historical juncture, Sri Aurobindo the foremost of the spiritual Teachers should have prepared and given unto this nation and to the world the most dynamic and the most spiritual goal, the manifestation of Spirit in Matter. In Sri Aurobindo then, as our spiritual Teacher, we should hope for the realisation of the regeneration of our nation and the birth and success of the new spiritual education. For spiritual education needs indeed the spiritual Teacher. And suffice it to say that Sri Aurobindo is present in our midst and my inner prayer is that He may invade us with all His glory and creative power and realise in us and through us all that we most ardently aspire for : Knowledge, Love, Power and Beauty.

Let me conclude by quoting here the Mother's message that She had given last year to the Education Commission :

"India has or rather had the knowledge of the Spirit, but she neglected Matter and suffered for it.

"The West has the knowledge of Matter but rejected the Spirit and suffers badly for it.

"An integral education which could, with some variations, be adapted to all the nations of the world must bring back the legitimate authority of the Spirit over a matter fully developed and utilised."

KIREET M. JOSHI

REVIEWS

The Science of Being and Art of Living By *H.H.Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*. Allied Publishers, Bombay 1. pp.365, price Rs. 18.00

IN this commendable attempt to relate the truths of Soul and Nature in a working synthesis for the modern man, the author rightly stresses on the prior, indispensable understanding of the Truth of one's own being before proceeding to the problem of right living. The first section is devoted to this exposition of the nature of the basic reality—individual and universal and also transcendent—and it is followed by a section on Life and its meaning. The third section discusses the ways in which the real Being can manifest itself in the diverse spheres of life.

The central theme of the exposition is the system of 'Deep Meditation' which Swamiji develops for the purpose of bridging the gulf between Spirit and Matter, Soul and Nature. As he is today, man is hardly aware of a hundredth part of his existence ; his mind is extremely limited in its scope and power. If he is to govern his life in a better manner and lead it to some kind of perfection, he must learn to extend his area of consciousness. And the means therefore, as expounded by the author, is the technique of deep meditation. To start with a proper Thought of Sound or Form in its gross state, concentrate upon its less gross and then subtle and subtler states till one comes to the subtlest state and is landed at its source, the point of transcendence. Once this is done, the whole meaning of life undergoes a change. Even as things proceed, under the direction of a trained teacher, the mind and the life parts of the system being to partake of larger intensities of power, joy and knowledge ; they embrace life from a higher and deeper poise and fulfil themselves in its varied activities in a more effective manner. The consequences of such an inner change affect not only the individual life but equally the collectivity in which the person functions.

An interesting book in which the findings of modern science are sought to be integrated with the perceptions of the ancient Rishis of India.

The Vedanta Sutrās with the Sri Bhashya of Ramanujacharya. Translated into English by M. Rangacharya and M. B. Varadaraja Aiyangar. Vol. III P. 611, Price Rs. 15.

This volume brings to a worthy close the great work of Prof. M. Rangacharya and his colleague in presenting a faithful English rendering of the Commentary of Acharya Ramanuja on the Brahmasutras of Badarayana. It covers the portions from Chapter II, Part II to the end of Chapter IV and discusses many important topics among which the major ones are : the views of the Sankhyas, Bauddhas, Jainas and Pashupatas on the cause of the world and their refutation by Ramanuja; the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep of the self and the Brahman's freedom therefrom; important Vidyas like the Vaishvanara, Dahara, Prana and Sandilya; approved *karmas* as subsidiary to the Vidyas; the manner in which the release of the soul is effected at the time of death and the precise status of the liberated soul after the body is shed.

The translation is accompanied by accurate notes, a glossarial index, index to the *adhikaranas* and a valuable Analytical Outline at the beginning of the volume. The work is a great contribution to Vishishtadvaita literature in English and will always remain a book for study and reference to scholars in the Vedanta Philosophy of Qualified Monism.

Sri Chaitanya's Teachings By Sri Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj. Pub. Sree Gaudiya Math, Madras 14. Pp. 434, Price Rs. 12.00

This is a collection from the extensive writings of the author who founded the Gaudiya Math and its several branches for the propagation of the Message of Sri Chaitanya. The contents are varied, ranging from an Enquiry into the nature of the Absolute to interviews with western journalists, but the one continuing note is that of the manifestation of the Divine as Love and the unfailing efficacy of the Divine Name as the means for atonement with the Divine. There is a good deal of dialectics in the section on Vedanta, plenty of philo-

sophy in the discussion on the theistic solution of the cosmic problem, but the heart of the writer lies in *bhakti* and *rati*.

The chapter on Bhagavatam and Vaishnava Cult, mainly comprising of the discussion with Pandit Shyam Sunder Chakravarty (famous leader of the Independence movement), is particularly interesting.

Whether one is a philosopher or a devotee or a sadhaka, there is something for each one in these pages.

The Panchadasi Translated by Swami Swahananda. Pub. Sri Ramakrishna Muth, Madras 4. Pp. 618, Price Rs. 9.50.

The *Panchadasi*, work of fifteen chapters on the Advaita, by Sri Vidyanaraya is a treatise of major importance for seekers of the advaitic persuasion. An English translation of the text has been long a desideratum and the recent publication in England of the late H. P. Sastri's rendering (with the text in roman characters) has not been of much service in India in view of its prohibitive cost. The present edition with the translation by Swami Swahananda, a conscientious scholar and senior monk of the Sri Ramakrishna Order, is a very welcome and reliable release.

The work itself is usually studied under three convenient groupings : the first five as dealing with the discrimination of the real from the non-real, *viveka-pancaka*, the next five describing the nature of the Self as pure consciousness, *dipa-pancaka*, and the last five discussing the Delight nature of Brahman, *ananda-pancaka*. The exposition covers a large field, quotes from Upanishads and allied texts, and emphasises the importance of practical discipline for the realisation of Brahman in preference to dry learning.

Dr. Mahadevan's Introduction provides a very helpful background to the work, explaining as it does some of the key terms in the Advaita System that are used freely in the text. The translation is free and yet faithful with the notes, index and glossary adding to the value of the book.

M. P. PANDIT



EVERY THREE MINUTES . . .

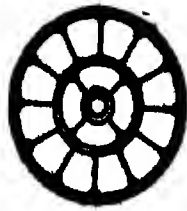
Once every three minutes an IAC aircraft is either landing or taking off from one of the 70 airports. With over 100 scheduled services a day, there are nearly 400 landings and take-offs not to mention charter, freight and training flights. More than 1.25 million passengers were carried last year over a network of 36,000 kilometres, making IAC one of the largest domestic airlines in the world.



INDIAN AIRLINES

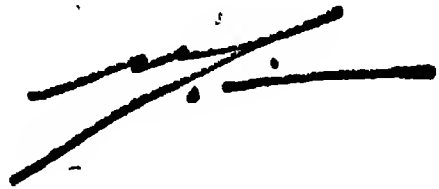


The Advent



You who are young, are the
hope of the country. Prepare
yourselves to be worthy of
this expectation.

Blessings



The ADVENT

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November 1967

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Thou must die to thyself to
reach God's height.

SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIAL

THE WORLD IS ONE

THE world is one, in fact and in potentia.

There is already a realised unity; that unity runs as the fundamental chord in and through differing and discordant notes. These different and discordant and even denying notes have to be re-conditioned, blended, harmonised; that is the effective and patent unity that lies in potentia and has to be brought forth in front. The world is one at bottom; it is to be made one up to the brim.

The material world is a factual unity. For it is one matter that exists everywhere; the same fundamental elements constitute, although in different degrees, the earth, the sun, the stars, the distant galaxies and the extra-galactic rays. It is in the last analysis charges of electricity—infinitesimal and infinite charges of electric force, points of energy that form the entire creation—pullulating particles that fill the universe; but they are not isolated, disconnected, dis-united, they are a continuum. This continuum was called 'ether' at one time, it is now called 'field'. This material unity consists in the one extension that turns and swirls into creases and

eddies giving the impression of separativeness and disunity. The task of the scientist is to know how to recondition the swirling dispersing expanse so as to assimilarise, polarise the disparate elements. That is the meaning of what the scientists are now handling as the 'laser' or 'maser' beams.¹

Likewise, the vital world is also one. It is one life that pulsates in and through all living formations—one sea as it were, swaying and heaving and breaking into innumerable waves and ripples. In spite of infinite variations there is one over-all pattern that persists through the living creation. Anatomy and more clearly physiology links in a strange way even the plant and the animal and man. And in humanity if there is a great vital upsurge somewhere, it spreads its vibration far and wide like a seismic motion. And it is because of this vital unity that there arises the phenomenon known as contagion or pest and pestilence—that is to say, mass-movements are occasioned by one indivisible life-urge. A common suffering or a common elation is normal to human life.

This fundamental unity, here too, works through discord and disunion, battle and conflict, denial and negation. Here too the drive or purpose of progress and of evolution is towards the same polarisation, that is to say, reorientation, evocation of vibrations that are a pure or harmonious expression of the unity.

Coming next to Mind, the unity here too, is quite marked, clearly discernible. There is only one Mind that rules the myriad mentalities of this world. Thoughts and ideas are not in reality personal creations, they are various formulations of the one universal Mind; they enter into and possess individual minds as receptacles, and no doubt in the process undergo particular modifications in their general character. It is a very common experience to see the same or very similar ideas and thoughts expressed by individuals (or groups) living far from each other, having practically no mutual contact. We have known of "independent discoveries" of the same truth or fact and innumerable instances of this kind has history provided for us. It is not a freak of nature that we find Socrates and Buddha

¹ Laser : Light amplifications due to the stimulated emission of Radiation.

Maser : Multiple amplifications, etc.

The result is that the light ray cuts diamonds, bores rocks, welds metals, and works as a surgeon's knife.

and Confucius as contemporaries. Contemporaries also were India's Akbar, England's Elizabeth and Italy's Leo X. Also the year 1905 has been known as *Annus Mirabilis*, a year of seminal importance—the sowing of the seed of a new earth-life—significant for the the whole human race, for the East and for the West, particularly for India, for Japan, for Russia and even for England. And today's world has indeed become a world of compact unity in human achievement and also, alas, in human distress !

Now if one goes to the very source, the very root of the matter, the cardinal fact of unity is that of the supreme Consciousness, the original oneness of the one Divine Existence. It is the Ultimate One, inviolate, inviolable—*ekam sat*. That unity is transferred or translated or imaged on all the levels and strands of creation. That is the basic reality that holds together all tiered multiplicities. True, there has been side by side a movement of aberration, denial, disjunction in the multiple formulations and translations of the One. A re-union remains to be achieved conveying and embodying the basic unity.

The disturbing factor in the universal sway of unity is the sense of individualisation, the sense of ego. That is the dark ray that cuts across the radiant harmony and produces the apparent discordance and disunion with all its attendant and consequent evil and bale.

The sense of separated and isolated existence, the feeling of a closed system that one assumes in opposition to others is the Maya of which the Vedanta speaks. It is real so long as it is taken to be real. But it possesses no inherent or absolute reality. A re-orientation or a re-modelling of the individual self is the way towards re-establishing in the forefront, the background unity. Egoism, as it happens to be now, is the broken-up and scattered unity. Polarisation means precisely re-ordering and re-orienting the dispersal movement of ignorance and bringing into a new purposeful existence the unity that already exists.

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM : (VI) THE EMERGENCE OF TERRORISM

NERVOUS ANGLO-INDIA

TIME was when Srijut Surendranath Banerjea was held by nervous Anglo-India to be the crowned King of an insurgent Bengal, a very pestilent fellow flooding the country with sedition and rebellion. The whirligig of Time brings round with it strange revenges and at this moment Srijut Surendranath is returning to India acclaimed by English Conservatives as a pillar of British Empire. India's representative with a mighty organisation behind him pledged to loyalty, co-operation and the support of Morleyan reform. After Surendranath, Srijut Bepin Chandra Pal, reputed editor of *Bande-mataram* and the author of the great Madras speeches, loomed as the arch-plotter of revolution and the chief danger to the Empire. The same Bepin Chandra is now a peaceful and unsuspected journalist and lecturer in London acquitted, we hope, of all wish to be the Ravana destined to shake the British Kailash. But Anglo-India needs a bogeyman and by a few letters to the *Times*, Mr. Krishna-varma has leaped into that eminent but unenviable position. Who knows? In another year or two even he may be considered a harmless, if inconvenient, idealist. What is it, one wonders, that has turned the firm, phlegmatic Briton into a nervous quaking old woman in love with imaginative terrors? Is it democracy? Is it the new sensation-alist Press run by Harmsworth and Company? The phenomenon is inexplicable, but, it is to be feared, it is going to be permanent.

THE ANUSILAN SAMITY

The proclamation of the Anusilan Samiti in Calcutta is one of the most autocratic and unjustifiable acts that the bureaucracy have yet committed. The Calcutta Samiti has distinguished itself, since the beginning of its career, by the rigidity with which it has enforced

its rule of not mixing as an association with current politics and confining itself to such activities as were not only objectionable, but of such a nature that even the most autocratic Government, provided it had the least sympathy with the moral and physical improvement of its subjects, must wholly approve. Its original and main motive has been the improvement of the physique in the race, and there has been no instance in which the Samiti has gone beyond its function as a physical training institution or tried to use the improved physique for any combined purpose. Beyond this the main activities have been turned to the help of the Police and the public on such occasions as the Ardhodaya Yoga, to the organisation of famine relief, in which the Samiti has done a splendid work, and recently to other action recommended by the Government itself. We believe it has even to a certain extent enjoyed the approbation of high European officials. It is indeed an ironical comment on the demand for co-operation that the only great association born of the new movement which has shown any anxiety to depart from a line of strict independent activity and co-operate with the Government, should have been selected, at this time of peace and quiet, for proclamation on the extraordinary ground that it interferes in some undefined and mysterious way with the administration of the law. Advocates of co-operation, take note. Meanwhile what can the man in the street conclude except that the Government is determined to allow no organisation to exist among the Bengalis which has the least trace in it of self-help, training and patriotic effort? For no explanation is vouchsafed of this arbitrary act. In an august and awful silence the gods of Belvedere hurl their omnipotent paper thunderbolts, careless of what mere men may think, confident in their self-arrogated attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence, a divine, irresistible, an irresponsible mystery.

THE DAULATPUR DACOITY

The extraordinary story from Daulatpur of a dacoity by young men of good family, sons of Government servants, is the strangest that has yet been handled by the detective ability of a very active police—more active, if not successful, we are afraid, in cases of this

kind than those in which the dacoits are of a less interesting character. The details as first published read more like a somewhat gruesome comic opera than anything else. Dacoits who wear gold watches and gold spectacles on their hazardous expeditions, dacoits who talk English so as to give a clue to their identity, dacoits who turn up at a railway station wearing gold watches, bare-footed and stained with mud, decoits who carry in their pockets bloodcurdling oaths neatly written out for the police to read in case they are caught, are creatures of so novel and eccentric a character that they must have either come out of a farcical opera or escaped from the nearest lunatic asylum. The latter accounts modify some of the most startling features of the first but until the story for the prosecution is laid before the Courts, thoroughly known and thoroughly tested, sensational head lines and graphic details are apt to mislead.

THE INDISCRETIONS OF SIR EDWARD

The speech of Sir Edward Baker in the Bengal Council last week was one of those indiscretions which statesmen occasionally commit and invariably repent, but which live in their results long after the immediate occasion has been forgotten. The speech is a mass of indiscretions from beginning to end. Its first error was to rise to the bait of Mr. Madhusudan Das's grotesquely violent speech on the London murders and assume a political significance in the act of the young man, Dhingra. The theory of a conspiracy behind this act is, we believe, generally rejected in England. It is not supported by a scrap of evidence and is repudiated by the London police, a much more skilful detective body than any we have in India and, needless to say, much more reliable in the matter of scrupulousness and integrity. It is the opinion of the London police that the act was dictated by personal resentment and not by political motives. It is not enough to urge in answer that the young man who committed this ruthless act himself alleges political motives. His family insist that he is a sort of neurotic maniac, and it is a matter of common knowledge that natures so disturbed often catch at tendencies in the air to give a fictitious dignity and sensational interest to actions really dictated by the exaggerated feelings common

to these nervous disorders. Madanlal Dhingra evidently considered that Sri William Curzon-Wyllie was his personal enemy trying to alienate his family and interfere with his personal freedom and dignity. To an ordinary man these ideas would not have occurred or, if they had occurred, would not have excited homicidal feelings. But in disturbed minds such exaggerated emotions and their resultant acts are only too common. Unless and until something fresh transpires, no one has a right to assume that the murder was a political assassination, much less the overt act of a political conspiracy. Anglo-Indian papers of the virulent type whose utterances are distorted by fear and hatred of Indian aspirations, may assume that of which there is no proof,—nothing better can be expected of them. But for the ruler of a province not only to make the assumption publicly but to base upon it a threat of an unprecedented character against a whole nation is an indiscretion which passes measure.

THE DEMAND FOR CO-OPERATION

The second crying indiscretion in Sir Edward's speech is the extraordinary demand for co-operation which he makes upon the people of this country. It is natural that a Government should desire co-operation on the part of the people and under normal circumstances it is not necessary to ask for it; it is spontaneously given. The circumstances in India are not normal. When a Government expects co-operation, it is because it either represents the nation or is in the habit of consulting its wishes. The Government in India does not represent the nation, and in Bengal at least it has distinctly set itself against its wishes. It has driven the Partition through against the most passionate and universal agitation the country has ever witnessed. It has set itself to baffle the Swadeshi-Boycott agitation. It has adopted against that movement all but the ultimate measures of repression. Nine deportations including in their scope several of the most respected and blameless leaders of the people stand to their debit account unredressed. Even in giving the new reforms, inconclusive and in some of their circumstances detrimental to the best interests of the country, it has been anxious to let it be known that it is not yielding to the wishes of the people but acting on its own

autocratic motion. Against such a system and principle of administration the people of this country have no remedy except the refusal of co-operation and even that has been done only within the smallest limits possible. Under such circumstances, it is indeed a grotesque attitude for the ruler of Bengal to get up from his seat in the Council and not only request co-operation but demand it on pain of indiscriminate penalties such as only an autocratic government can inflict on the people under its control, and this with the full understanding that none of the grievances of the people are to be redressed. The meaning of co-operation is not passive obedience, it implies that the Government shall rule according to the wishes of the people and the people work in unison with the Government for the maintenance of their common interests. By advancing the demand in the way he has advanced it, Sir Edward Baker has made the position of his Government worse and not better.

WHAT CO-OPERATION?

The delusion under which the Government labours that the terrorist activities have a great organisation at their back, is the source of its most fatal mistakes. Everyone who knows anything of this country is aware that this theory is a fabrication. If it were a fact, the conspiracy would by this time have been exposed and destroyed. The assassinations have in all instances, except the yet doubtful Maniktola conspiracy now under judicial consideration, been the act of isolated individuals, and even in the Maniktola instance, if we accept the finding of the Sessions Court, it has been shown by judicial investigation that the group of young men was small and so secret in their operations that only a few even of those who lived in their headquarters knew anything of the contemplated terrorism. Under such circumstances we fail to see either any justification for so passionate a call for co-operation or any possibility of an answer from the public. All that the public can do is to express disapprobation of the methods used by these isolated youths. It cannot turn itself into a huge Criminal Investigation Department to ferret out the half a dozen men here and there who possibly contemplate assassination and leave its other occupations and duties after

the pattern of the police who in many quarters are so busy with suppressing fancied Swadeshi outrages that real outrage and dacoity go unpunished. We do not suppose that Sir Edward Baker himself would make such a demand, but if he has any other co-operation in view it would be well if he would define it before he proceeds with his strenuous proposal to strike out right and left at the innocent and the guilty without discrimination. On the other hand the Anglo-Indian papers are at no loss for the definite method of co-operation which they demand from the country on peril of "stern and relentless repression". They demand that we shall cease to practise or preach patriotism and patriotic self-sacrifice and submit unconditionally to the eternally unalterable absolutism which is the only system of government Lord Morley will tolerate in India. That demand has only to be mentioned to be scouted.

SIR EDWARD'S MENACE

The final indiscretion of Sir Edward Baker was also the worst. We do not think we have ever heard before of an official in Sir Edward's responsible position uttering such a menace as issued from the head of the province on an occasion and in a place where his responsibility should have been specially remembered. We have heard of autocrats threatening the contumacious opponents with condign punishment, but even an autocrat of the fiercest and most absolute kind does not threaten the people with the punishment of the innocent. The thing is done habitually in Russia, it has been done recently in Bengal, but it is always on the supposition that the man punished is guilty. Even in the deportations the Government has been eager to impress the world with the idea that although it is unable to face a court of justice with the "information, not evidence" which is its excuse, it had ample grounds for its belief in the guilt of the deportees. Sir Edward Baker is the first ruler to declare with cynical openness that if he is not gratified in his demands, he will not care whether he strikes the innocent or the guilty. By doing so he has dealt an almost fatal blow at the prestige of the Government. If this novel principle of administration is applied, in what way will the Government that terrorizes from above be superior to the dynamiter who terrorizes from below?

Will not this be the negation of all law, justice and government? Does it not mean the reign of lawless force and that worst consummation of all, anarchy from above struggling with anarchy from below? The Government which denies the first principle of settled society, not only sanctions but introduces anarchy. It is thus that established authority creates violent revolutions. They abolish by persecution all the forces, leaders, advocates of peaceful and rapid progress and by their own will set themselves face to face with an enemy who cannot so be abolished. Terrorism thrives on administrative violence and injustice; that is the only atmosphere in which it can thrive and grow. It sometimes follows the example of indiscriminate violence from above; it sometimes, though very rarely, sets it from below. But the power above which follows the example from below is on the way to committing suicide. It has consented to the abrogation of the one principle which is the life breath of settled governments.

THE PERSONAL RESULT

Sir Edward Baker came into office with the reputation of a liberal ruler anxious to appease unrest. Till now he has maintained it in spite of the ominous pronouncement he made, when introducing measures of repression, about the insufficiency of the weapons with which the Government was arming itself. But by his latest pronouncement, contradicting as it does the first principles not only of Liberalism but of all wise Conservatism all over the world, he has gone far to justify those who were doubtful of his genuine sympathy with the people. Probably he did not himself realise what a wound he was giving to his own reputation and with it to his chances of carrying any portion of the people with him.

MADANLAL DHINGRA

Madanlal Dhingra pays the inevitable and foreseen penalty of his crime. We have no wish whatever to load the memory of this unfortunate young man with curses and denunciations. Rather we hope that in his last moments he will be able to look back in a calm

spirit on his act and with a mind enlightened by the near approach of death prepare his soul for the great transit. No man but he can say what were the real motives for his deed. If personal resentment and exaggerated emotions were the cause of his crime, a realisation of the true nature of the offence may yet help the soul in its future career. If, on the other hand, a random patriotism was at its back, we have little hope that reflection will induce him to change his views. Minds imbued with these ideas are the despair of the statesman and the political thinker. They follow their bent with a remorseless firmness which defies alike the arrows of the reasoner and the terrors of a violent death. He must in that case go forth to reap the fruits in other bodies and new circumstances. Here his country remains behind to bear the consequences of his act.

PRESS GARBAGE IN ENGLAND

It is at least gratifying to find that the theory of conspiracy is exploded except in the minds of Anglo-Indian papers and perhaps of a few Anglo-Indian statesmen and officials. Not a single circumstance has justified the wild suspicions and wild inventions which journals like the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* poured thick upon the world in the first few days that followed the occurrence. These strange fictions are still travelling to us by mail. The most extraordinary of them is perhaps that launched by a certain gentleman who is bold enough to give his name in the *World*. It seems that long ago the redoubtable Krishnavarma in a moment of benign and expansive frankness selected this gentleman and revealed to him the details of a gigantic plot he has been elaborating for the last eight years with a view to the murder, wholesale and retail, of Anglo Indian Officials. If the story were true, Krishnavarma's confidant ought certainly to have been put in the dock as an accessory before the crime on the ground of criminal concealment. These romances sound ridiculous enough now that we read them three weeks afterwards when the excitement of the hour has passed, but the harm this kind of journalism can do was sufficiently proved at the time of the Chinese disturbances and the trouble which preceded the Boer War. That these daily voidings of impudent falsehood and fabrication should be

eagerly swallowed by thousands shows the rapid deterioration of British dignity and sobriety.

SHYAMJI KRISHNAVARMMA

The exaggerated view of Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma as an arch conspirator of malign subtlety and power which has long been inculcating terrorist opinions among young men and building up a secret society, is one which none can accept who has any knowledge of this gentleman's past career. Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma is an earnest, vehement and outspoken idealist, passionately attached to his own views and intolerant of all who oppose them. He first went to England to breathe the atmosphere of a free country where he could speak as well as think as he chose. He was then a strong constitutionalist and his chief intellectual pre-occupations were Herbert Spencer, Home Rule and the position of the Native States. When the new movement flooded India it carried Mr. Krishnavarma forward with it. He became an ardent Nationalist, a confirmed passive resister with an idealistic aversion to violent methods and a strong conviction that, whatever might be the case with other countries, India would neither need nor resort to them. His conversion to Terrorism is quite recent and has astonished most those who knew him best. We know that Srijut Bepin Pal went to England with the confident expectation of finding full sympathy and co-operation from the editor of the *Indian Sociologist*. The quarrel between the two resulting from the change in Mr. Krishnavarma's views is a matter of public knowledge. We refuse therefore to believe that Mr. Krishnavarma has been a plotter of assassination and secret disseminator of Terrorism or that the India House is a centre for the propagation and fulfilment of the ideas he has himself ventilated in the *Times*.

A FALSE STEP

Srijut Surendranath's maladroitness reference to the outrages when speaking at Bombay was a false step which he has since made some attempt to recover. However it be put, it was maladroitness and unnecessary. Any promise of co-operation in this respect implied an

admission that we have the power to prevent these incidents and are therefore to some extent responsible either for bringing them about or for not stopping them before. It echoes the indiscretion by which Sir Edward Baker sought to make a whole nation responsible for these acts of recklessness and excuses vindictive and headstrong utterances in which Mr. Gokhale tried to protect his own party and invoke the fiercest repression against his Nationalist countrymen. The isolated instances of assassination during the last year or more have been the reaction, deplorable enough, against the insane policy of indiscriminate police rule and repression which was started and progressively increased in the recent stages of the movement. Not by a single word or expression ought any public man to allow the responsibility to be shifted from the right quarter and to rest in the slightest degree on the people who had no part in them, no power to detect and stop the inflamed and resolute secret assassination and no authority given them by which they can bring about the removal of the real causes of the symptom. To dissociate oneself is a different matter. That should be done clearly, firmly and once for all.

THE ALIPORE JUDGEMENT

The judgement of the Appeal Court in the Alipore Case has resulted in the reduction of sentences to a greater or less extent in all but two notable instances, and on the other hand, the maintenance of the finding of the Lower Court in all but six cases, on five of which there is a difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and Justice Carnduff. So long as these cases are still subjudice, we reserve our general comments on the trial. At present we can only offer a few remarks on special features of the judgement. The acquittal of the Maratha, Hari Balkirshna Kane, must give universal satisfaction as his conviction, in the absence of any evidence in the least establishing his guilt, would have been a gross miscarriage of justice. The rejection of Section 121 and the consequent elimination of the death sentences is also a result on which the Government and the country may both be congratulated. Even in the case of actual political assassins the infection of the death sentences, however legally justifiable, is bad policy. Death sentences for political crimes only provide martyrs

to a revolutionary cause, nerve the violent to fresh acts of vengeance and terrorism, and create through the liberation of the spirits of the dead men a psychical force making for further unrest and those passions of political revolt and fierceness to which they were attached in life. The prolongation of terrorism is undesirable in the interests of the country; for, so long as young men are attached to these methods of violence, the efforts of a more orderly though not less strenuous Nationalism to organise and spread itself must be seriously hampered. We are glad to note that the Chief Justice has in no case condemned and accused on the evidence of the watch-witnesses alone. Such evidences, always suspect in the eyes of the people of this country, and the gross blunders, if they were no worse, committed by several of the police witnesses in this case deprive their identifications of all evidential value. Once the confessions were admitted as entirely voluntary and entirely true, the fate of the confessing prisoners and of those directly implicated by them as active members of the society was a foregone conclusion. The conviction of an accused on such a serious charge where there is no clear incriminating evidence against him except the confessions of others, is no doubt permissible under ordinary jurisprudence when these confessions create a moral certainty in the mind of the judge; but if this rule sometimes prevents the escape of the guilty, it not seldom lends itself to the punishment of the innocent. Of more importance, however, and the one serious flaw we are disposed to find in the Chief Justice's judgement, is the exaggerated importance attached to familiarity and intimacy between the leaders of the conspiracy and those whose guilt was open to doubt. When there is a secret conspiracy, it is inevitable that there should be numbers of men intimately associated with the members, perhaps even co-operating with them in surface political action, who are yet in entire ignorance of the close and dangerous proceedings of their friends. It was a recognition of this obvious fact that largely governed Mr. Beechcroft's findings; but we cannot help feeling that neither he nor the Appeal Court, ignorant, like all Englishmen, of the actual workings of the National Movement, have given sufficient weight to this consideration. As a result, the benefit of the doubt has not been extended where it should have been extended. Already it was a general conviction in the public mind that one innocent man had

been convicted and succumbed to the rigours of jail life, while two are hopelessly condemned to the brutal and brutifying punishments by which European society avenges itself on the breakers of its laws,—we refer to the Kabiraj brothers found by Mr. Beachcroft to be innocent of conspiracy and therefore presumably innocent tools of conspirators. There is an uneasy sense that some at least have been added to the list by the judgement in appeal. Even if it be so, however, the judges have done their best, and the European legal system has always been a lottery by which it is easy, without any fault on the part of the judge, for the guilty to escape and the innocent to suffer. It is perhaps one of the necessary risks of joining in Nationalist movements to be liable to be confounded in one fate with secret conspirators who happen to be associates in social or legitimate political relations, and when the C.I.D. throws its nets with a generous wideness, we ought not to whine if such accidents bring us into the meshes. The State must be preserved at any cost. In any case, the whole country must be grateful to Sir Lawrence Jenkins for the courtesy, patience and fairness with which he has heard the case and given every facility to the defence, an attitude which might with advantage be copied by certain civilian judges in and outside the High Court and even by certain Judges, not civilians, in other provinces.

THE BOMB CASE AND ANGLO-INDIA

The comments of the Anglo-Indian papers on the result of the appeal in the Alipore case are neither particularly edifying nor do they tend to remove the impression shared by us with many thoughtful Englishmen that the imperial race is being seriously demoralised by empire. From the *Englishman* we expect nothing better, and in fact we are agreeably surprised at the comparative harmlessness of its triumphant articles on the day after the judgement. Its reference to the nonsense about there being no sedition in India and no party of Revolution leaves our withers unwrung. We ourselves belong to a party of peaceful revolution, for it is a rapid revolution in the system of Government in India which is the aim of our political efforts, and it is idle to object to us that there have been no

peaceful revolutions and cannot be. History gives the lie to that statement, whether it proceeds from Mr. Gokhale or from Anglo-India. We have also always admitted that there is a Terrorist party, for bombs are not thrown without hands and men are not shot for political reasons unless there is a Terrorism in the background. All we have contended,—and our contention is not overthrown by the judgement in the Alipore appeal, which merely proves that the conspiracy was not childish and by no means that it was a big or widespread organisation,—is that the attempt of the Anglo-Indian papers to blacken the whole movement, and especially the whole Nationalist party, is either an erroneous or an unscrupulous attempt, and the disposition of the police to arrest every young Swadeshi worker as a rebel and a dacoit is foolish, wrong-headed, often dishonest, and may easily become fatal to the chances of a peaceful solution of the dispute between the Government and the people. The *Englishman*, however, represents a lower grade of intellect and refinement to which these considerations are not likely to present themselves. The average respectable Englishman is better represented by the *Statesman*, and the one dominating note in the *Statesman* is that of regret that the Courts had to go through the ordinary procedure of the law and could not effect a swift dramatic and terror-striking vindication of the inviolability of the British Government. One would have thought that a nation with the legal political traditions of the English People would have been glad that the procedure of law had been preserved, the chances of error minimised and the State still safeguarded ; and that no ground had been given for a charge of differentiating between a political and ordinary trial to the prejudice of the accused. It is evident, however, that the type of Englishman demoralised by empire and absolute power considers that, in political cases, the Law Courts should not occupy themselves with finding out the truth, but be used as a political instrument for vengeance and striking terror into political opponents.

THE NASIK MURDER

The tale of assassinations is evidently not at an end ; and it

is difficult to believe that they will be until a more normal condition of things has been restored. The sporadic and occasional character of these regrettable incidents is sufficient to prove that they are not the work of a widespread Terrorist organisation, but of individuals or small groups raw in organisation and irresolute in action. The Anglo-Indian superstition of a great Revolutionary organisation like the Russian revolutionary Committee is a romantic delusion. The facts are entirely inconsistent with it. What we see is that, where there is sporadic repression of a severe kind on the part of the authorities, there is sporadic retaliation on the part of a few youthful conspirators, perfectly random in its aim and objective. The Nasik murder is an act of terrorist reprisal for the dangerously severe sentence passed on the revolutionary versifier Savarkar. It is natural that there should have been many meetings in Maharashtra to denounce the assassination, but such denunciations do not carry us very far. They have no effect whatever on the minds of men who are convinced that to slay and be slain is their duty to their country. The disease is one that can only be dealt with by removing its roots, not by denouncing its symptoms. The Anglo-Indian papers find the root in our criticism of Government action and policy and suggest the silencing of the Press as the best means of removing the root. If the Government believe in this antiquated diagnosis, they may certainly try the expedient suggested. Our idea is that it will only drive the roots deeper. We have ourselves, while strongly opposing and criticising the actions and policy of the bureaucracy, abstained from commenting on specific acts of repression, as we had no wish to inflame public feeling; but to silence Nationalism means to help Terrorism. Our view is that the only way to get rid of the disease is to disprove Mr. Gokhale's baneful teaching that violence is the only means of securing independence, to give the people hope in a peaceful and effective means of progress towards that ideal, which is now the openly or secretly cherished ideal of every Indian and to that end to organise peaceful opposition and progress within the law. If the Government can retrace their steps and remove the ban from lawful passive resistance and self-help and the Nationalist party, while holding its ultimate political aim, will define its immediate objective within limits which a Radical Government can here-

after consider, we believe politics in India will 'assume a normal course under normal conditions. We propose to do our part ; we will see whether the Government think it worth their while to respond. They ought to be able to understand by this time that Nationalism and not Moderatism is the effective political force in India.

SRI AUROBINDO

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

IX

Even so he had pulled out the solid stake,
Broken all the bondages that encircle :
Kanhū revels drunk with the sweetest wine,
He enters heaven's lotus-grove and attains the calmness ;
Even like the elephant in rut for his mate
He rains Truth's own realities.
All the sixfold movements in his nature are purified :
Whether in the Presence or in the Absence
even the hair's end does not stir.
From the ten sides the ten delightful treasures
have been gathered,
To capture the Consciousness, as one does an elephant,
with ease.

NOTES

All the ties of the world are broken. Kanhū is free, he is free
in the Supreme Ecstasy.

XI*

The central cord is set firm in its frame ;
And in the heart the soundless drum
resounds valiantly;
Kanhū the Kapali, the yogi, is engaged in his rites.
He wanders in the city of his body
in perfect identity ;
The duals—vowels and consonants—are like
tinkling bells and anklets on his feet ;
The sun and the moon are his carvings.
Love and hate and delusion are burnt to ashes.
He has put on the pearl-necklace
of Supreme Liberation ;

* For X, see Advent : August 1966.

He has slain the mother-in-law and the sister-in-law
who held the house—

Indeed he has slain maya and become Kapali.

NOTES

The central cord : the cords (nadi) are the lines or channels of psycho-vital forces that govern the human organism, control the general functions of the body. These lines or channels are sometimes identified with the nervous system but they are more subtle than the material substance, more vital than physical. Their effective expression, their principal agency in the physical is the respiratory system. Their numbers are variously counted, sometimes sixty-four, sometimes thirty-four, but the principal ones are three. These form a trinity and follow the line of the spinal cord. They are the famous 'Ida', 'Pingala' and 'Susumna.' Ida and Pingala are on either side of the spinal cord, the central one being the Susumna. The two on either side are the ascending and the descending lines, (sometimes they are represented as the twins, knowledge and power); the central holds the balance between the two, representing the consciousness of unity or synthesis. These are the triple forces that control the breath and are made use of in Hathayoga—the intaking, the outgoing and the holding in of the the breath (Purak, Rechak and Kumbhak); these are described as the means of controlling and mastering the life-force, Prana.

The two lines on either side of the central one form a circulatory system, distributing the forces through the body; the central one, as I said, balancing the two, maintains the poise; it has also a special function of its own not only to guide the forces around itself but also to direct them upward. Along with the physico-vital movement there is also psychological movement, a movement of consciousness that establishes harmony among the forces around and also rises upward and through the crown of the head goes beyond. The whole operation may be transcribed as a movement of consciousness or consciousness-force (chit-tapas) seeking to establish a new purified order in the human system in relation to a higher order.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

THE YOGA OF NATURE

All Life is Yoga.¹

All Life is a Yoga of Nature.²

THERE are two different views of Nature in Indian spiritual philosophy. The main issue is whether Nature is conscious or unconscious. In order to understand the idea of the Yoga of Nature, it is necessary to determine the character of Nature, to decide whether Nature of which all life is said to be an universal yoga can be unconscious. The Samkhya, Yoga and Shankara Vedanta look upon Nature as unconscious, a Power of Ignorance. On the other hand we have in the Veda, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Tantric Texts, and the philosophies based upon these ancient scriptures, a most clear formulation of the concept of Nature as Chit Shakti, Conscious Force.

In the Samkhya and the Yoga philosophies Purusha is pure consciousness without any capacity for self-reflection, self-enjoyment and self-projection as the manifest world. Prakriti, the origin of the Universe, is an unconscious power which evolves all existence out of itself. True, she starts functioning only when Purusha gazes at her though without in any other way moving her to act. The works of Prakriti are reflected on the pure Consciousness which is Purusha which due to Ignorance mistakenly thinks them to be its own acts and experiences. These two philosophies do not give any arguments why Prakriti is not or cannot be conscious.

Shankara conceives Reality as a pure identity of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Any kind of power for him is and must be unconscious because it implies change which is foreign to the Nature of the Brahman; change means difference of which Reality is completely free. The question of the relation of power and that which is endowed with power is also a difficult point. Shankara does not admit that any kind of relation can belong to Brahman because things which are related by whatever kind of relation it

1.2. *Synthesis of Yoga* 1955—p. 637.

may be, must also be related to the relation itself and this will lead to infinite regress. Anyway whatever may be the logic, what we need to remember is that for Shankara, the power that projects the world is ignorant and unconscious. With regard to the relation between Maya and Brahman the answer is that Maya is the power of Brahman and yet cannot really be so. The point about relations can be answered by saying that a relation is something that can relate two things and in the very process is related with the relata (that is the things which are related). Regarding change, those who believe that Reality is dynamic, do not say that it itself undergoes transformation in such a manner that its nature itself is changed.

In the Veda That One, *tad ekam*, is said to have inherent strength. The Nasadiya-Sukta¹ says That One breathed without Air, because of its own strength.

This 'own strength' of the one is its self-nature. Vak is said be the One² and Brahma.³ We know that Vak is in the Veda as well as in the Tantras the dynamic aspect of the supreme Reality called either Purushottama or Parama Shiva. *Vāgita tad Brahma*,⁴ Vak is that Brahman. And Vak and Aditi are identified.⁵ It is said that by Vak every thing is created.⁶ So is Aditi said to be "the heaven, the mid regions...all that has been and all that will be," heaven in this context meaning the mind and the mid-regions, the life-force and the worlds created by it. Aditi is the Conscious Force of the One the Knowledge and will of the Deva. The Purusha Sukta says that He is all that has been and all that is to be.⁷

The Upanishadic vision of Reality is most comprehensive. Like the Veda, the Upanishads formulate it as transcendent, cosmic and individual. As transcendent it is beyond all categories, even those of existence and consciousness. But as the base and the origin of the cosmos it is existence, consciousness and bliss. *Tasya jñāna-*

¹ Rv. X. 129.2.

² Rv. X. 81.7. X. 71.

³ Rv. I 3.21.

⁴ Jai up Br. II 9.6 cf Vag Brahma. Gopatha Brahmana II 10. (II) Vagghi brahman. Aitareya Brahmana II 15.

Vagar ditih Satopatha Brahman VI. 5.2.20.

29 Vak Vai brahman, Ait. BR. VI. 3 ; S.B. II 1.4.15.

RV. X. 90.

mayam tapaḥ,¹ *tasyaiva śaktirvividhaiva śrūyāte devātma-śaktiḥ*—there are many similar phrases affirming that Power is inherent in the Divine, the Ishwara. The Gita in a similar manner speaks of Para-Prakriti which is other than Apra-Prakriti, the unconscious and eight fold nature.² Para Prakriti is the conscious-force of Purushottama and essentially spiritual in character. Their identity is clearly brought out in such statements, among others, like the ‘Jiva is an eternal portion of Me’ (Purushottama) and ‘Paraprakriti has become the Jiva’. In the Tantras also we come across the idea of conscious force. It is described as the *sāra hr̥dya*, the essence and the heart of Shiva. Shakti is said to be in identity with Shiva without which it cannot be conceived. On the other hand Shiva without Shakti is Shava, dead as it were. In other words Shiva is never without Shakti. Shiva and Shakti are held in perfect equilibrium in Parama Shiva. The Consciousness Force is at once Shiva’s power of Self-knowledge, Self-enjoyment and Self-manifestation as the Universe. In the school of Bengal Vaishnavism, Reality is conceived as *jñānam ādvayam*, non-dual super-consciousness which is designated by seers and sages as Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan. The last is the highest of the three aspects. The distinction between the three aspects of the same Reality lies in the fact that in the last, the inherent own-shakti, Svarupa-Shakti, is fully manifest, in the second it is only partially so and in the first, it is unmanifest. Here again the Reality in its highest aspect has an inherent Conscious Nature. We see now that Nature in its essential character is Reality itself as dynamic. The precise nature of this dynamism is the Power of Self-knowledge, Self-enjoyment and Self-variation. In his book, *The Mother*, Sri Aurobindo writes “the Supreme transcendent Maha Shakti bears the Divine in Her consciousness”. For him Cit is not only Consciousness but also Force of Consciousness. Due to this Force of Consciousness, Reality cannot but be Self-aware. The whole of existence is the result of an inexhaustible Force which in the last analysis turns out to be conscious both by itself and of its works. For Sri Aurobindo also Cit is not only the power of Self-Consciousness of the Divine

¹ Mundaka I 1.9. see ibid I. 1.8

² Abhinava Gupta—Ishwara Pratyabhigana Vimarshini. 1-5-14. Kshemarga Parapraveshika. h.1.

but also of Self-enjoyment and Self-manifestation as the world.

The Yoga of Nature, now that we have seen that it is Conscious Power, can be understood on three different levels. Yoga means Union. And the first aspect of the Yoga of Nature is that it is in eternal union with the Divine. There is a dalliance, a sport of love which the Reality enjoys with itself as Nature, its own inherent Power. "Being one and alone, he did not enjoy the bliss of Union.... He wished for a second... He divided his own self and became pati and patni".¹ The Taittiriya Upanishad also describes the self as *ānandamaya*, blissful and *ānandabhuk*, enjoyer of bliss. Abhinav Gupta has said of Param Shiva 'this Lord is ever eager to enjoy the bliss of play with the Devi.'² One of the chief features of Shakti in the Tantric philosophies is that it is Vimarsha, the Force of the sentiment of Camatkriti, wondering. Shiva looks at himself in Shaktias if in a mirror and is filled with wonder. This gives rise to Ananda or self-enjoyment of Shiva, as the integral "I".

In Bengal Vaishnavism also Bhagavan with the help of his Svarupa-Shakti loves himself and enjoys the bliss of loving. Of *svarūpa-śakti* there are three aspects Sandhini which upholds Bhagavan's own existence and that of others, Samvit by which he knows his existence and that of others and Hladini by which he enjoys bliss and makes others enjoy it. All these are of course aspects of *cit śakti* which eternally exists in him in the relation of identity and is called *antaraṅga śakti*, that is intimate and inherent Power. Bhagavan or Krishna has two aspects. He is rasika, enjoyer of rasa, bliss of love and also rasa that can be enjoyed. He has Svarupananda, he enjoys the bliss of his own self. He has Saktyananda also, that is, the bliss of enjoying his Shakti. This really implies two forms of enjoyable bliss. Krishna enjoys himself by his own intimate inherent Shakti with the Power of enjoyment, Hladini dominating. *Rupheri Apanar Krishner tage chamatkar alingite name uthe Kam*, when he sees his form, Krishna is filled with wonder and he wishes to embrace it. Love splits itself as Lover and Beloved. Krishna is both male and female just as Lalita, who is Tripura of Shakta Tantric Literature also is both female and male. The *Tantrarāja* says, 'Lalita has the form of Krishna

¹ Br. U.p. 1-4-3-2.

² Bodhapanccadasika. 6.

and is male and charmed the world by the flute.' Hladini, essentially delightful because of her connection with Ananda, becomes more enjoyable when Krishna throws her as it were into the hearts of his Parikaras. There it is transformed into devotion and love, bhakti and prema which are turned towards Krishna by the devotee in the act of service to him. And this is greatly enjoyed by the Supreme Lover. The devotees themselves also enjoy his intoxicating sweetness through prema.

All is a play of the Supreme.¹ In the tops gnosis and in the Ananda he (Purusha) is one with the Prakriti and no longer solely biune with her.... All is the conscious play of the Supreme and divine Shakti in its own and the infinite bliss-nature. This is the supreme mystery, the highest secret. And the Mother asks "But how to express certain silent secrets?"² These are the most hidden secrets of the oneness of each other enjoyed by the Supreme and the Parashakti.

Yoga also means supra-rational and mysterious Power. In the Rig Veda it is said that 'That One' concentrated into creation, downwards as the axis of the universe. This is *aja ekapāda*, the Unborn Onefooted, who carries the cosmic design in his consciousness but himself does not move, *acaram*.³ And we have already seen that Purusha becomes everything, and yet he exceeds the universe by ten measures *atyatiṣṭhat daśāṅgulam*. This simultaneous capacity of the Reality to be beyond and in the universe is due to his own mysterious Power which baffles reason. It is this aspect of Paraprakriti which the Gita describes as My Yoga *aiśvara*. "By the power of a Divine Yoga we have come out of his inexpressible secrecies into this bounded nature of phenomenal things".⁴ There is a Yoga of divine Power, by which the Supreme creates phenomenon of himself in spiritual, not a material self-formulation of his own extended infinity, an extension of which the material is only an image."³ But "he is not in them... God is not the becoming... they are his becomings he is their being, and again "he sees himself as one

¹ Sri Aurobindo, On Yoga I. p.581 cf.p.573.

² The Mother—Prayers and Meditations June 22, 1914.

³ RV III. 56.2.

⁴ Sri Aurobindo—Essays on the Gita, second series 1942, p. 65.5.6, ibid 276—cf p.277-305-306.

with that, is identified with that and all it harbours. In that infinite self-seeing, which is not his whole seeing... he is at once one with all that is and yet exceeds it."

In the Tantric philosophies too Shiva is both Visvottarra and Visvatmaka, transcendent and immanent. While Shiva through Shakti becomes every thing and knows his identity with all that Shakti manifests and enjoys integral I-ness, he yet has a status beyond the universe projected by his own inherent Shakti. Here again we see a reference to what the Gita calls Yoga maya and Yoga *aishvra*. The creation of the universe itself is through yoga of the Divine. He desired "May I be many. He concentrated in Tapas, by Tapas he created the world, creating he entered into it."¹

We have already made brief references to the concept of Cit Shakti as explained in Bengal Vaishnavism. While Bhagavan does not create, the Reality in its aspect of Paramatma does. And creation is carried out not by Hladini-Shakti but by Maya-Shakti which, a lower aspect of Conscious Force is described as *bahiranga* Shakti, external power. Yet the Tapas aspect is not absent in this concept and we find here again the Yoga of nature. For Sri Aurobindo Cit is the Divine's power of both self-reflection and of self-manifestation. "Cit is a power not only of knowledge but of expressive will, not only of receptive vision but of formative representation. The two indeed are one power. For Cit is an action of Being, not of the void. What it sees that becomes. It sees itself beyond space and time, that becomes in the conditions of space and time".² The concentration of Cit on itself gives rise to Ananda or bliss. In Ananda arises Ichcha, will to extend itself in a world of self variation. The overflow of Ananda as and into the world is the origin of all. It is not necessary to explain Sri Aurobindo's idea of self-limitation which is the origin of the World. It may sound a paradox but creation is at once self-expansion and self-limitation of the Divine. The Tapas practised by the Lord of the universe to manifest the world of variety from his inalienable unity is the yoga of Nature.

Yoga we have said is Tapas or energising of Consciousness. It is spiritual effort which man has to make in order to find his true

¹ Tait. Up.II.6

² Sri Aurobindo—Isha Up. 1951-9 38.

being and its ground and source. The Ground of all existence has many aspects, many facets. "It is the Zero which is all". Being, Consciousness, Force, Delight, the origin and support and moving power of all existence, it is in itself an unfathomable mystery. Yet it reveals a little of its secrets, partly unveils its nature by veiling its absolute-ness. In other words by renouncing its own intrinsic ever unknown Mystery, it manifests itself to the enlightened intelligence of man. This self-revelation is varied and does not follow just one line of manifestation. Transcendent, Cosmic and Individual, detached from its own process of self-manifestation and yet freely engaged in it, the Reality becomes everything. Man thus may seek it in any one or more than one or all its aspects. And he does so according to his capacity and the particular aspect or aspects that attracts his soul. It is well known that there are many yogas or systems of spiritual discipline and culture. In some of these the idea of Conscious Nature is not present and they could not on the face of it be called Yogas of Nature. But even those are methods of concentration of man's powers which are ultimately powers of Nature or Prakriti. For example in Samkhya yoga it is the *buddhi*, purified intelligence, in which the disassociation of Purusha and Prakriti takes place. By definition, however, Purusha does nothing, it is *buddhi* which works towards a complete cessation of the modes of the mind stuff, *citta-vṛtti-irodha*. And *Buddhi* is the first evolute of Prakriti and it is therefore Prakriti which does the yoga. Truly, Prakriti works for the good of the Purusha, even to the extent of working out the Purusha's freedom from its involvement in Prakriti. The same might be said of Maya in Shankara-Vedanta, which whatever the technical difference in its metaphysical conception of Reality, has the same idea of Nature. Maya in it having the same character as that of Prakriti of Samkhya Yoga except that Maya is said to be neither real nor unreal while Prakriti is real. As far as practical spiritual effort is concerned it is again *Buddhi* that undertakes it and it is through that that the direct *anubhava*, intuition and experience is had. All *Vrittis* or psychological modes are restricted and the *Buddhi* concentrated exclusively on Brahman. This gives rise to the last mode the *brahmākāravṛtti*, the mode of the form of Brahman. It burns itself out and what remains is pure consciousness. Maya in a sense breaks the false notion of a separate individual self

and also gives rise to the true Knowledge of the absolute and the rejection of the world as unreal.

In the systems which accept Nature as Conscious Power, it is the Force that does the yoga in the seeker. Aditi carries the seeker of Beatitude like a faultless ship. "May we ascend Aditi for Beatitude, the divine ship endowed with quick propellers, faultless, intact without slits, a capable protector, spacious as earth, like heaven, to which no hurt can come, a happy shelter and skilful career."¹ In the Gita Paraprakriti is the true mover of all movements of Nature. All subjective becomings are ultimately her becomings, though these are distorted in the field of lower Prakriti. But the higher and nobler impulses also come from her. We have said that the creation is a result of the divine Yoga. "By a reverse movement of the same Yoga" says Sri Aurobindo, "we must transcend the units of phenomenal nature and recover the greater consciousness by which we live in the Divine and the Eternal."² And again, "he has manifested the world in himself in all these ways by his divine yoga To awaken to the revelation of him in all these ways together is man's side of the same divine yoga".

Parama Shiva has five eternal functions—Tirodhana or Nigraha, Sristi, Sthiti, Samhara and Anugraha, that is, self-veiling, creation, preservation, and disillution of the universe, and grace. Creation is the result of self-veiling or self-contraction of Paramashiva. Shiva through using his freewill limits himself and becomes Jiva which is atomic, *anu*.

Jiva is as truly Shiva which is its original status but does not know it. The atomic Jiva cannot by its own effort start on the spiritual path and attain Self-Knowledge. He must have the grace of Shiva for the opening of his consciousness towards liberation. The grace is nothing but the awakening of Shakti in, or from another side, the descent of Shakti on Jiva. Abhinava Gupta in his *Tantrasāra* has even said that one who is hit by a tremendous avalanche of Shakti can have realisation instantaneously. It is Shakti which after the Jiva's initiation carries on the spiritual effort in him. True, the Jiva may not realise it and as long as he has the sense that he can and has

¹ Y.V.21.6.

² Essays on the Gita, 275.

something to do, he must not be complacent and effect an inert surrender. But progress in Sadhana would reveal to him that Conscious Nature is doing the Yoga in him.

Grace is also a form and a function of Bhagavan without which Jiva cannot attain liberation according to Bengal Vaishnavism. And certainly there is no possibility whatsoever of Jiva's attaining devotion and love for Bhagavan without the work of Grace in him. It is said that Jivas must turn themselves as parts of Radha, who in the religious symbolism of Bengal Vaishnavism, is Svarupa-Shakti personified. For it is Radha alone who can approach and look up to Krishna. In the hearts of the devotees and lovers of Krishna Hladini-Shakti is transformed into Bhakti and Prema which find expression in loving services in Krishna's Lilas and is enjoyed by him. This is the Yoga of Nature in the most intense form of the religion of love.

It is however in the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo that the idea of the Yoga of Nature is most prominent. There is in Nature a secret aspiration for perfection which Yoga essentially is. Nature is full of a Knowledge-Will which is now veiled and not capable of functioning with its sovereign Force in the field of the body, life and mind,—and the existence of man is a complex of these three. Sri Aurobindo has said, "here in the material world life is her reaching out from a first inconscience towards return to Union with a Conscient Divine from whom she proceeded. In religion the mind of man, her accomplished instrument becomes aware of her goal in him, and responds to her aspiration."¹ And what starts in religion is fulfilled in yoga. The capital difference of this yoga from others is that its aim is far more comprehensive than that of the traditional ones. It not only seeks liberation from Ignorance, not only aspires that man, Nature's chosen instrument, should realise all the aspects of the ultimate Reality which he is in his secret self; but its goal is that his whole existence and nature should be transformed into divine existence and nature. Instead of being as it is now, a structure of Ignorance dimly lit by knowledge, of power lame and limping of love which demands more than it gives, the mind, life and body of man can and should be able to shed the hold of Ignorance on them and then open to

¹ Synthesis—p. 638.

the integral Knowledge—Will—Love of the Divine. This in Sri Aurobindo's language is Supermind which is the true origin of mind, life and matter and can transform them purifying them of their ignorance, disturbances and desires, inertia and rigidity. They will not be dissolved or destroyed but, as a result of the transformation, manifest new qualities and capacities. The mind will become a mind of Light, Life a movement of Will and the body a form of spiritual substance. It is through the Supermind that Nature will attain the perfection of which it is in travail. "The aim of synthetic or integral yoga...is union with the being, consciousness and delight of the Divine through every part of our human nature separately or simultaneously but all in the long and harmonious and unified, so that the whole may be transformed into a divine nature of beingNot with the Knower in him alone, not with the will alone, nor with the heart alone but with all these equally and also with the whole mental and vital being in him he aspires to the God-head and labours to convert their nature into its divine equivalent".¹ The attainment in man of this integral union of Nature with the Divine will usher in a transformed world and the Life Divine for the manifestation of the Supermind in mind, life and matter will not be an individual achievement but will initiate the evolution of a gnostic community and ultimately a race of supermen. The following Meditation of the Mother, dated June 15th, 1913 describes the aim of the Yoga of Nature most beautifully and forcefully "Even he who might have arrived at perfect contemplation in silence and solitude could only have done so by extacting himself from his body, by making an abstraction of himself ; and thus the substance of which the body is constituted would remain as impure, as imperfect as before, since he would have abandoned it to itself, by a misguided mysticism, by the attraction of supraphysical splendours, by the egoistic desire of being united with Thee for his personal satisfaction, he would have turned his back upon the reason of his earthly existence, he would refuse coward-like to accomplish his mission to redeem and purify matter. To know that a part of our being is perfectly pure, to commune with that purity, to be identified with

¹ *Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 670. 1955.

it, can be useful only if we subsequently utilise this Knowledge for hastening the earthly transfiguration for accomplishing Thy sublime work."

But this aim can be attained only by the joint effort of two things—the aspiration of man and the responding Grace of the Divine. Even the aspiration is in the last analysis a movement of the Divine Shakti in man. The secret of this yoga is to have things done by the Shakti. Sri Aurobindo is perfectly clear on the point that the Sadhaka of his integral yoga is the Divine himself in man and the power of the Sadhana the Divine Shakti herself. The culmination of Sadhana of this Yoga of Nature in the sense of total conversion of existence and of life into a most perfect expression of the Divine being, Consciousness, force and delight is nothing short of the yoga of Nature as the bliss of the union of the Supreme with Mahashakti.... "Love becomes a movement by which the Divine Nature in man takes possession of and enjoys the delight of the universal and the Supreme Divine". This love is experienced and enjoyed not only by the soul of man but also by his mental, vital and physical consciousness. When Nature in all her levels and aspects including the material, will be in perfect union, Yoga, with her Master, that will be the fulfilment of the Yoga of Nature.

ARINDAM BASU

THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

(Contd.)

VI. THE CRITIQUE OF THE *Jivanmukti*—SOLUTION

THE passage describes the state of consciousness when one is aloof from all things even when in their midst and all is felt to be unreal, an illusion. There are then no preferences or desires because things are too unreal to desire or to prefer one to another. But, at the same time, one feels no necessity to flee from the world or not to do any action, because being free from the illusion, action or living in the world does not weigh upon one, one is not bound or involved.

(Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, pp. 660-61)

When one sees a mirage for the first time, he mistakes it for a reality, and after vainly trying to quench his thirst in it, learns that it is a mirage. But whenever he sees such a phenomenon in future, in spite of the apparent reality, the idea that he sees a mirage always presents itself to him. So is the world of Maya to a Jivanmukta (the liberated in life).

(Swami Vivekananda, *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, p.104)

I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer. Actions have I none, past or present or future. I possess no body nor does bodylessness characterise my state. How can I say what is mine and what is not?

(Dattatreya, *Avadhuta-Gita*, 1.66)

We have seen in the previous chapter why the Yogic trance even if it be of the supreme sort, the Nirvikalpa Samadhi, fail to meet the demands of the Yoga of Transformation. As a matter of fact what we envisage for our goal is very much wider in base, far superior in scope and loftier in its flight than the attainments offered by the Nirvikalpa trance. In Sri Aurobindo's own words, "the realisation of this yoga is not lower but higher than Nirvana or Nirvikalpa

samadhi.”¹ For, we do not want to be satisfied with inner psycho-spiritual experiences alone, we seek also the total and complete realisation of the Divine in the outer consciousness and in the life of action.

But the detractor may interject at this point : “The waking realisation that you are aiming at—has it not been already possessed by those who have been variously termed *jīvanmukta* (‘liberated while still leading a bodily life’), *sthitaprajña* (‘established in the true Knowledge and Wisdom’), *atīvarṇāśramī* (‘beyond all standards of conduct’) or *brahmavid* (‘one who has known and been the Brahman’²)?”—the implication of the question being that there is after all nothing essentially new in the ideal we pursue.

But a little reflection will suffice to show that the Jivanmukti realisation or realisations of the same *genre* fall far short of the goal of divinised waking physical existence that is the object of our own Yoga. After all, who is a Jivanmukta? And what essentially characterises his comportment vis-a-vis this world of dynamic manifestation? For a suitable answer let us fall back upon three citations, chosen at random from among a host of others and culled from ancient texts as well as from those of our day.

First from the great Monistic text *Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana*:

“The Jivanmukta is one to whose consciousness only the undifferentiated Vyoma exists and this phenomenal world has lost all reality, although his organs may appear to function as before.... He maintains his body with whatever little comes to it naturally and effortlessly.... He is called a Jivanmukta who is no more awake to the world of senses although his sense-organs appear to be awake as ever....He who has transcended the ego-sense and does not get involved in action, is indeed a Jivanmukta whether he is active or not.”³

Now from Sri Ramakrishna : “He who has attained this knowledge of Brahman is a Jivanmukta, liberated while living in the body. He rightly understands that the Atman and the body are two separate things....These two are separate like the kernel and the shell of

¹ On Yoga II, p. 62.

² Cf. “*Brahmavid brahma eva bhavati*” (“one who knows the Divine becomes the Divine”).

³ *Yoga-Vasishtha (Utpatti-Prakarana)*, sarga 9, sls. 4,6,7,9,

the coconut while its milk dries up. The Atman moves, as it were, within the body.... The kernel of a green almond or betel-nut cannot be separated from the shell; but when they are ripe the juice dries up and the kernel separates from the shell. After the attainment of the Knowledge of Brahman, the 'milk' of worldly-mindedness dries up."¹

Finally a long excerpt from Swami Vivekananda: "...He has reached the perfection which the Advaitist wants to attain; and *at that moment*,...the veil of ignorance falls away from him, and he will feel his own nature. Even in this life, he will feel that he is one with the universe. *For a time*, as it were, the whole of this phenomenal world will disappear for him, and he will realise what he is. But *so long as the Karma of this body remains, he will have to live*. This state, when the veil has vanished and yet the body remains for some time, is what the Vedantists call Jivanmukti, the living freedom. If a man is deluded by a mirage for some time, and one day the mirage disappears—if it comes back again next day or at some future time, he will not be deluded. Before the mirage first broke, the man could not distinguish between the reality and the deception. But when it has once broken, as long as he has organs and eyes to work with, he will see the image, but *will no more be deluded*. That fine distinction between the actual world and the mirage, he has caught, and the latter cannot delude him any more. So when the Vedantist has realised his own nature, the whole world has vanished for him. *It will come back again, but no more the same world...*"²

[Italics ours]

The above three excerpts purporting to characterise the status of a Jivanmukta make it abundantly clear that *prima facie* Jivanmukti in the specific sense in which it is generally understood can by no means measure up to our ideal of the divinely dynamic transformation of the whole of our waking existence. But before we pass the final judgement it would be better for us to examine, in however brief a manner, some of the principal traits of the Jivanmukti-realisation.

¹ *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Advaita Ashram, Almora), p. 695.

² Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, vol. I, p. 365.

A. Jivanmukti and Videhamukti : Jivanmukti is never considered to be *the* goal in itself, ; it is, so to say, no more than a stop-gap arrangement, a wayside inn,—the ultimate goal, the goal *par excellence*, being always *videhamukti* or the liberation that is attained with the dissolution of the body. But this *videhamukti* or “disembodied liberation” is sought to be effected in two stages : the first stage, the penultimate attainment as it were, is reached when through the gaining of the true Knowledge of Reality of one’s own being as well as of the world-existence, the propensity to future births in this phenomenal universe is altogether stamped out ; the second and final stage being the dropping off of the current body-formation and the attainment to the status of *videhamukti*. Jivanmukti represents the status of that seeker who has already attained Self-Knowledge but is still leading the present bodily life awaiting the day when this will cease for good and he will become “liberated in bodylessness” (*videhamukta*).

It follows then that the Jivanmukti status is the more valued, the more it approaches the character of Videhamukti even while the siddha is still in his body. So the divine transformation of the bodily existence has here no relevance at all. As a matter of fact, the famous Vidyaranya Muni, one of the reputed authors of the Monistic Work *Panchadashi*, wrote a full treatise on Jivanmukti, called Jivanmukti-Viveka, only to prove at the end that after all Videhamukti is the *summum bonum* and Jivanmukti is a step towards this supreme goal.

But if this is so, the question arises : why, then, even after the attainment of Self-Realisation, should the siddha agree at all to remain for some time in the body in the Jivanmukti status and not pass immediately and directly into Videhamukti when the latter is the real objective sought after ? The answer that is generally offered is in terms of the Theory of Karma which we have already discussed in Chapter I. Since Prarabdha Karmas¹ (that is to say, those that have started bearing their fruits) have produced our present body and since these cannot be infructified except through their exhaustion by sufferance, even on the attainment of liberation, the body

¹ Vide Chapter I : The Bane of Oscillation,

may continue to remain viable for some time, but for some time only. When the prarabdhas are over, the body automatically disintegrates and the Jivanmukti status gives place to Videhamukti.

Thus the Jivanmukti realisation appears almost as the virtue of a necessity and the waking physical existence in this phenomenal universe cannot be considered in this view to be a field specially worthy of spiritualisation.

In order to substantiate the points that we have made above, we adduce below a few observations drawn from different sources.

“...After realising that state described in the scriptures, the saint sees the Self in all beings and in that consciousness devotes himself to service, so that *any Karma that was yet left to be worked out through the body may exhaust itself*. It is this state which has been described by the authors of the Shastras (scriptures) as Jivanmukti ‘Freedom while living’.” [Italics ours]

(Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, vol. VII, pp.112-113)

“A DEVOTEE : ‘Does the body remain even after the realization of God?’

MASTER : ‘The body survives with some so that they may work out their Prarabdha Karma or work for the welfare of others....Of course, he...*escapes future births*, which would otherwise be necessary for reaping the results of his past Karma. His present body remains alive as long as its momentum is not exhausted ; but future births are no longer possible. *The wheel moves so long as the impulse that has set it in motion lasts. Then it comes to a stop*’.” [Italics ours]
(*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p.431)

“The ultimate liberation [from the chain of births] is attained with the dawning of the Knowledge itself.” (“*jñānasamakālamuktaḥ kaivalyaṁ yāti*” : Sheshacharya, *Paramārthasāra* or *Aryapañcāśiti*, 81).

“Once a Jivanmukta, one has no more future births”, (“*bhūyo-janmavinirmuktaṁ jīvanmuktasya tanmanah*” : *Yoga-Vasishtha*, Upashama-Prakarana, 90.18).

“He that has Knowledge...reaches that goal whence he is not

born again" ("yastu vijñānavān bhavati...sa tu tatpadamāpnoti yasmad bhūyo na jāyate" : *Katha-Upanishad*, III. 8).

"Even after attaining to the status of Jivanmukta, one continues for a while to remain in his body, merely to exhaust the momentum of the Prarabdha" ("prārabdhakarmavegena jīvanmukto yadā bhavet. Kañcit kālamathārabdhakarmavandhasya sañkṣaye" : Shankaracharya, *Vākyavritti*, 52).

"He has to wait [for his Videhamukti] only so long as he is not released from his body. At the fall of the body he attains to the supreme status" ("tasya tāvadeva ciraṁ yāvanna vimokṣe atha sampatsye" : *Chhandogya-Upanishad*, 6.14.2).

"Once the Prarabdhas are experienced and gone through, one acquires the supreme liberation" ("bhogena tvitare kṣapayitvā sampadyate" : Vyasa, *Brahmasūtra*, 4.1.19).

"Once the body gets consumed by Time, the Knower leaves his status of Jivanmukti and enters into the state of Videhamukti" ("jīvanmuktapadam tyaktvā svadehe kālasātkṛte, viśatyadehamuktatvam" : *Yoga-Vasishtha*, II.9.14).

"...When he takes up his abode in it, he grieves not, but when he is set free from it, that is his deliverance"¹ ("anuṣṭhāya na śocati vimuktaśca vimucyate" : *Katha-Upanishad*, V.1.).

"The Jivanmukta, even while he is still alive, has in reality no body at all" ("jīvato'pi aśariratvam siddham" : Shankar).

"The liberation that one gains at the fall of the body is indeed the highest one, for this liberation cannot be negated any more" ("piṇḍapātena yā muktiḥ sa muktirna tu hanyate" : *Yogashikhopanishad*, I.163).

"At the fall of his body the Yogi merges in his supreme self-being, just as the space inside an earthen pot vanishes in the great cosmic Space, when the pot is broken and gone" ("ghaṭe bhinne ghaṭākāśa ākāśe liyate yathā, dehābhāve tathā yogī svarūpe paramātmani" : Dattatreya, *Avadhūta-Gītā*, 1.69).

"Once one attains to Videhamukti, there is no more return to this phenomenal world" ("punarāvṛttirahitam kaivalyam prati-padyate" : Shankaracharya, *Vākyavṛtti*).

¹ Sri Aurobindo's translation (*Eight Upanishads*, p. 77.)

“There is no more coming back for them” (“*teṣāṃ na punar-āvṛttiḥ*” : Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 6.2.15).

“No more wheeling in this human whirlpool” (“*imam mānav-amāvartam nāvartante*” : Chhandyogya Upanishad, 8.15).

It is clear from what goes before that, contrary to our attitude to the body and physical existence, the Jivanmukti ideal does not attach much importance to any terrestrial realisation as such; it only tolerates the bodily life so long as it has to be borne and thus tries, if we may say so, make the best of a bad bargain.

But whatever the nature of the ideal sought, how does a Jivanmukta behave so far as his waking state is concerned? Does his dynamic life satisfy the criterion of a divinely purposive and active physical existence? Here too the answer is an unambiguous NO.

B. Jivanmukta and the Dynamic Waking State : The goal we envisage for our sadhana is, as we have stressed so many times before, is “not only to rise out of the ordinary ignorant world-consciousness into the divine consciousness, but to bring the supramental power of that divine consciousness down into the ignorance of mind, life and body, to transform them, to manifest the Divine here and create a divine life in Matter.”¹ It is thus almost an axiomatic truth that yoga by works should form an indispensable part of our sadhana and an essential element of our realisation if we would seek to transplant the fullness of the spirit in the field of life and action. But the Jivanmukta does not in the least manifest this divine dynamis and thus does not measure up to our ideal.

As a matter of fact he is altogether indifferent to action (*kurvato' kurvataḥ*²). For, although apparently still in his body, the Jivanmukta does not really participate in any of its workings. The world still appears before him, but he is no longer deceived by what he would call its *māyā*. Indeed he looks upon his body “as if a corpse separated from his Self” (“*svavapuḥ kuṇapamiva drśyate yatastadvapurapa-dhvastam*” : Paramahansa-Upanishad).

¹ On Yoga II, p. 478.

² Yoga-Vasishtha, III.9.9.

The result is that a Jivanmukta is indifferent to his bodily life. "Just as a person intoxicated with liquor is altogether oblivious of the absence or otherwise of his dress, so is the Jivanmukta of the state and location of his ephemeral body. Whether the body remains stationary at a place or gets displaced from there or even stumbles down is equal to him."¹ Also, "the Brahmanid does never remember his body. It continues to be maintained by the Life-breath, *prāṇa-vāyu*, just as a trained horse goes on pulling the cart as ever even when the driver has withdrawn all his attention."²

Thus the bodily mechanism of a Jivanmukta may indeed continue to function because of the gathered force of Prakriti and he may apparently walk and speak and behave as before, but all this is like an empty machine in no way supported by any participating consciousness. The liberated spirit witnesses these actions (*sākṣyaḥ*) but does not take part in them ("*kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi* : Yoga-shikopaniṣad, IV.45). There is no sense of personal action (*na kurve nāpi kāraye*³) hence for the Jivanmukta there is no bondage or responsibility (*na sa muḍhavallipyate*⁴; *mamākarturalepasya*⁵).

As a matter of fact, it is the organs of sense and action that become automatically active for the continued maintenance of the body (*caḥṣurādīndriyaṁ svataḥ pravartate vahiḥsvārthe*⁶) and the Jivanmukta himself living all the while "in communion of oneness with the Transcendent" seems to the outward eye to be acting as a somnambulist (*suptabuddhavaḥ*⁷). For "although he has eyes, he acts as the eyeless; although he has ears, he acts as the earless; although he has speech, he acts as the speechless; and although he has life, he acts as the lifeless."⁸

Thus there cannot be any dynamically purposive action in the life of a Jivanmukta. He participates, if at all, only in simple innocuous actions solely meant for the upkeep of the body (*Kevalam śārīraṁ karma*⁹), or in those which are occasioned by his previous

¹ *Bhāgavatam*, XI. 13.36.

² *Chhandyogya Upaniṣad*, 8.12.3.

³ ⁴ *Avadhutopaniṣad*, 25,6,22.

⁵ *Yoga-Vasishtha*, III. 52.59.

⁶ *Ibid.*, III. 118.19. III.9.7., III. 16.22., III. 88. 13, VII.1.8.

⁷ "*sacakṣuracakṣurīva sakarṇo' karma iva savāgavāgīva saprāṇo'prāṇa iva*" (cited in *Jivanmukti-Viveka* by Vidyananya Muni).

⁸ *Dattatreya, Jivanmukti Gita*, 8,

samskaras (“*purvācārakramāgatam ācāramācaranti*”¹) or at the most in those apparently significant actions which are brought about not through his personal initiation but only through the agency of the Prarabdha (*yathāprāptam hi karmavyam, kuru kāryam yathāgatam*²).

The foregoing consideration unmistakably shows that Jivan-mukti as traditionally conceived cannot at all be equated to our ideal. What we aim at is something radically different from this liberated status.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *Yoga-Vasishtha*, III. 118.19.

² *Ibid.*, III. 88.11—13.

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

SERVICE OF HUMANITY (*contd.*)

WE have discussed the question of the service of humanity almost threadbare. We have considered it from various angles. We have seen that the way we go about the business of serving humanity is not the right way, and that it does not contribute to any substantial improvement of its lot. Since we are ourselves in ignorance—ignorance of our real self, ignorance of the significance and purpose of our life, ignorance of what constitutes our essential well-being and the essential well-being of others—any altruistic or philanthropic work undertaken by us cannot but be a pretentious bungle. We have perforce to act in this state of ignorance, for life is action, but our conscious endeavour should be directed more and more towards achieving freedom from it. So long as we act in ignorance, so long as we do not know what our own good consists in, we should have the humility not to meddle with the affairs of others and presume to better their condition.

But this perception of our ignorance is veiled by our self-conceit, and it is this conceit that impels us to the so-called service of humanity. It gives us the sense that we are doing something, that we are superior to others, earnestly exerting ourselves to render help to those who stand in sore need of it. “That is what I meant when I said that it is ambition or egoism that makes you humanitarian,” says the Mother, “of course, if it pleases you to do the work, if you feel happy in doing it, you are at perfect liberty to do the work and continue. But do not imagine that you are doing any real or effective service to humanity; particularly, do not imagine that by that you are serving God, leading a spiritual life or doing Yoga.”¹

If humanity does not reap any solid or substantial benefit and our only gain or reward is an inflated ego, what then, is the rationale of our humanitarian work? Does it make us happy? We have already pondered this point at some length and found that it

¹ *The Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, Part 7: Nolini Kanta Gupta.*

does not. Bertrand Russel's recipe for the conquest of happiness is a cheap distraction. It diverts our consciousness from the very thing which would lead us to eternal happiness. In ignorance, there is no possibility of conquering happiness ; what one gets is a fleeting pleasure or a precarious and delusive satisfaction. But the yearning for happiness, if it is not a mere craving for transient pleasures, is a profound and legitimate yearning, and it cannot rest till it is fulfilled.

What then, is happiness as distinguished from pleasures, and how to conquer it ? That is the last point we have to consider.

The Upanishads give a very terse definition of happiness :

यो वै भूमा तत् सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति

—that alone which is vast is happiness, there is no happiness in what is little. It means that happiness is found only in the infinite, and not in what is finite and limited. The objects of the world are all finite. They can give us only finite, fugitive happiness, which is another name for pleasure ; and pleasures are invariably followed by sorrows and suffering. Happiness, illimitable and unebbing, uncaused and unconditioned, inheres only in the Infinite, and we can enjoy this happiness only by renouncing all our attachment to finite forms and identifying ourselves with the Infinite.

The Mother says, "True happiness has its origin in the Divine, it is pure and unconditional."¹ Here we get not only the Infinite, but the living, loving Infinite, the Author and Master of our being and of all beings, the Supreme, the Divine, as the sole origin of eternal happiness. In Him we fulfil our yearning for happiness. In Him we slake our thirst for love and beauty, peace and harmony, purity and perfection. All that we have been seeking for in vain in the perishable forms of the world we realise at once and for ever in Him. That is happiness. That is Ananda. That is the luminous matrix of the whole universe. It is this eternal Mother of Love and Delight that the benighted souls have been searching for, life after life, in the obscurity of ignorance. Each cry they utter, each

¹ Gems from the Mother in *The Mother of Love* by M. P. Pandit.

sigh they heave, acts as a lever of ascent to the supreme happiness. From Ananda they have come and to Ananda they must return. And it is this termless Ananda that they are destined to pour upon this sorrowful earth until earthly life itself is transmuted into the Divine Life and the tears and sighs of suffering melt into the everlasting Ananda of the Divine. Love and joy and beauty are the essence of the soul of man, and it is its eternal essence in the Divine that it seeks for.

How to conquer this happiness ? It cannot be conquered by the human ego. "The only way to a true and lasting happiness is a complete and exclusive reliance on the Divine Grace."¹ This Grace is but the dynamic aspect of the Divine's Love, creative and redemptive.

How can we realise the Divine's Love and receive the benediction of His Grace ? Love alone can invoke Love. Love is the master passion of human heart. If we can turn it from the finite forms of the world and direct it with all the intensity of our being towards the Divine Infinite, we are sure to be taken up into it. It will mean the end of all our anguished wanderings in the world of mortal forms and our rebirth into immortality, even here on earth, in the human body.

We shall then realise that "Love alone can put an end to the suffering of the world".² In the service of the Divine lies the secret of the true service of humanity.

RISHABHCHAND

¹ Gems from the Mother in *The Mother of Love* by M.P. Pandit.

² Ibid.

THE LIFE DIVINE

(BRIEF SUMMARY)

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ASCENDING SERIES OF SUBSTANCE

THE materiality of Matter consists in a concentration of the density of substance and its resistance to the conscious-force of which through sense it becomes the object. An ascending scale of substance from Matter to Spirit must mean a diminution of resistance, division and bondage and an increasing subtlety, flexibility, power of assimilation, interchange, transmutation, unification.

There is such an ascending scale from the dense to the subtle even in material substance and beyond the subtlest material essence we have grades of other substance corresponding to the series of Matter, Life, Mind, Supermind and Spirit. Each, that is to say, is the basis of a world or other kind of existence in which these higher principles successively dominate the others and fulfil themselves with their aid. In each therefore there is an ever wider range of being, consciousness and force ascending from the unconsciousness of spiritual. But all these principles are interconnected. Matter contains all of them and evolves them out of itself in obedience to the constant pressure of the higher worlds, and evolution which must continue until they are able to express themselves fully in the material principle.

Man is the fit instrument for this fulfilment. He has other bodies besides the physical in which he can become conscious and so enter into the supraphysical grades of substance and impose their law upon his material existence. Therefore his complete perfection is through the ascent to supermind and the conquest of the physical also by the supramental substance so that he will be able to command a diviner physical life and conquer death in a divine body.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE SEVENFOLD CHORD OF BEING

There are, therefore, seven or else eight principles of being and the four which constitute divine existence, but in inverted order. The Divine descends from pure existence to Supermind to cast itself into cosmic existence, the creature ascends from Matter to Mind towards the Divine and meets it where mind and Supermind meet with a veil between them. By the rending of the veil each of the four divine human principles can find its transfigured self in its divine equivalent. This transfiguration is the only possible positive goal of the creative evolution.

The presence of the seven principles is the essential to all cosmic being. For cosmic being cannot exist except as the All-existence figuring itself in its self-conception as Time and Space, nor can this figuration take place except by an infinite Force which being of the nature of an all-determining and all-apprehending Will must repose on the action of an all-comprehending infinite Consciousness. Nor could the result be a cosmic but for a power of infinite knowledge and will determining out of the infinity in each figure of things their law, form and course through a self-limitation by Idea proceeding from a boundless liberty within. That power of Knowledge-Will, that Idea is the fourth name of the Divine; it is the Supermind or supreme Gnosis.

The lower trilogy is also necessary in some form however different it may be from our experience of Life, Mind and Matter. For there must be a subordinate power and action of Supermind measuring, creating fixed standpoints of mutual view and interaction in the universal self-diffusion as between an infinite number of centres of the one Consciousness; and such a power would be what we mean by Mind. So too, Mind once given, Life, which is the working of the will and energy and conscious dynamis of being dependent on such fixed standpoints of interaction, must accompany it and substance with differentiation of form must also be present.

It follows that in every cosmic arrangement the seven principles must be existent, either manifested in simultaneous apparent

action or else all apparently involved in one of them which then becomes the initial principle, but all secretly at work and bound to evolve into manifestation. Therefore out of initial Matter latent Life and Mind have emerged as apparent Life and Mind, and latent Supermind and the hidden Spirit must emerge as apparent Supermind and the triune glory of Sachchidananda.

SRI AUROBINDO

WORLD UNITY

IT was during the recent seminar of the World Union on *Education for One World*, that a friend asked me what was the meaning of the Mother's message that world unity is a fact and it is only to be manifested. Did it mean, he asked, that the Unity is on the supramental plane awaiting its translation on earth into human terms? I told him that was not how I had understood the message. There is a unity of being, a unity of consciousness, on all planes of existence including our physical world. Only, that unity is at present veiled by our Ignorance. When that veil is dissipated by conscious effort the underlying unity becomes patent. It is there naturally and does not have to be forged by our effort; the effort needed is to remove the obstruction of Ignorance in our consciousness and *let* that unity manifest.

Later I had an opportunity to ask the Mother about it. She confirmed and said that the Unity is there as a fact, a living truth behind the surface being. Man is not aware of it in his active consciousness because of its faulty looking. The moment he changes the standpoint of his consciousness, he sees the Unity as a self-evident truth, a dynamic fact which displaces the false sense of division that prevailed till then. The key lies in the proper placement of one's consciousness.

Speaking in the universal context, the Mother observed that the Mind has come to accept the truth of oneness of all being; even the Vital has come to have that feeling and experience; but the difficulty is in the Physical. The Physical is still under the load of past habit and even when it gets enlightened in parts, it shifts back to the old poise after a time. The cells have that perception, they embody it for a while but it is yet to be established.

This consciousness of oneness, the Mother continued, is dominant in plant-life. The plants are aware of it in a concrete way.

Has it been always so, or is that a result of the descent of the Supramental Force, I asked.

It has been now expedited, the Mother replied, their conscious-

ness has grown. She mentioned that She has been seeing many remarkable things in this direction with flowers. Even in the animal world that consciousness is growing; though, of course,—the Mother added with a gesture of helplessness—animals, who live close to man, do not share in that growth; they have lost their capacity to progress in their own way.

As a whole, the Mother concluded, the general consciousness in the world at all levels is moving in the direction of Oneness, as an immediate result of the influx of the Higher Power of the Supramental. The awareness of Oneness is emerging from within outward. The movement is all round. For, She explained, the supramental change does not simply mean a change at the top, a new dimension added to evolving creation; it certainly means a change all over. The whole imbibes and breathes the vibrations of the New Power, the New Consciousness; the whole undergoes a consequent transformation in the very stuff of its being.

Thus the Unity of All, its Oneness, is not a truth that lies in some high plane of existence above, awaiting its transition to the earth below but a truth that underlies our life here as its substratum. And this truth is steadily pressing into the zone of our awareness as a result of the pressure of the Supramental Descent on our consciousness.

M. P. PANDIT



PERSONALITY AND INTEGRAL YOGA*

MANY who are present here have known me as interested in psychology; and it was psychology, which concerns itself with the study and the growth of personality, that led me on to 'Yoga'. *Yoga* is indeed, nothing but a system of practical psychology, or an art of living which aims at the growth of personality. Personality is a subject very dear to the teacher in a double way. His aim is to help the growth of personality in the students that come under his charge. And to do that, he has himself to become a personality. But there is another reason why personality is an interest with all men. Lately there has been an interesting study of the subject by perhaps the profoundest of Western psychologists, viz., C. G. Jung. His book entitled "The Integration of the Personality" can be heartily commended to the study and careful consideration of everybody. An average human individual is far too much environment-determined and environment-dependent. He hardly lives independently. His thinking, his actions and his emotional reactions are mostly determined by the passing suggestion, the immediate example, and the catch-words of society. He is surely not a personality in any true sense of the word. A personality, in fact, comes into being only when an individual learns to live by himself. That is to say, when he knows himself as an individual centre of consciousness, an individual centre of existence, and seeks his direction and guidance from himself rather than from the environment. His reactions to the environment will then obviously be very different from that of an average man. He will not seek guidance for his decisions in life from other people's actions and precedents. He will also not be guided by utilitarian considerations of more gain and less loss or things of the kind. He will act in a different manner. A situation comes. He will try to feel himself in that situation. He will be aware of himself as being in the situation. He will not allow himself to become situation-dominated. "He, in the situation, seeking a solu-

* A speech delivered at a teachers' gathering in Delhi.

tion" will be the position. If he is spiritually disposed he will seek his solution from the Universal Consciousness by an inner act of appeal and supplication, otherwise he will try to think out his solution and in doing so he might consider other people's experience, precedents and even statistical data, but he will not be governed by them. They will be his merest aids. The decision, in fact, will proceed from himself, his own self-conscious life and being.

We have referred above to Jung's study of personality. He presents this idea in another manner. He says that the average man lives by tradition. Now what is tradition ? Tradition is the established usage or custom of society. Society has tried and experimented with a number of reactions to different situations of life and has come to acquire certain established modes of responding to those situations. If we compare several societies, we will find that they have distinctive features regarding their mode of conduct in the different situations of life. Let us take the situation of war as an example. Surely all societies will not act in the same way. But Jung goes on to argue that tradition can never be an adequate guidance to meet all the situations of life. When, for example, an unprecedented situation arises, society seeks to fall back upon some previous usage, but since the situation is unprecedented, no usage comes to help. Then we get into a crisis. The society does not know what to do. Jung says it is in just a situation like this that personality shows its worth. Personality is an individual who is so evolved from within, rather than under the governance of external circumstances, that he can put forth a creative activity at every moment of his life. He can, therefore, meet a crisis, he can act in a situation to which no precedents exist. Evidently personality is a supreme value of life. But how is one to develop personality ? Jung simply says that one should so grow up that one does not act as a slave of tradition, but as a master of it. But again, how is that to be done ? He does not give a method, but his analysis and facts are perfectly correct. Personality is a supreme value, personality alone is capable of acting in unprecedented situations and it involves a mastery of the situation and not a slavery to it. But how is such a value to be created ? It is just on this issue that the Indian mind has exercised itself in a very profound and tenacious manner. From times immemorial

of Indian history, what appears to have interested man most is knowing himself. The watch-word of Indian culture has been "*ātmānam viddhi*". The ancient Greeks too had a parallel expression as the motto of their culture and that used to be on the porches of their temples.

In the West since Renaissance, the attitude to life has been of a complementary kind. That is to say, man has been interested in external nature. He has sought to study how plants grow, how a stone moves down an inclined plane, or what the laws of physical and chemical functions of material nature are. It is a most interesting thing that modern physics has come to conclusions which are comparable to those reached by Indian thinkers and seekers after knowledge by another approach. It affirms that what appears to be solid, impenetrable, hard matter, is in fact not so; that it is merely an appearance, that the reality behind this appearance is energy—electric energy—and there are some physicists who affirm that this energy ultimately must be of the nature of will, which we know by direct experience in our own personality. That was exactly the conclusion reached by the Indian seekers after knowledge. The *ātman* in the individual and the Brahman in the universe are in fact, such will and consciousness and the rest is the outer expression. Regarding human personality, they said that its thoughts and feelings, its instincts and sentiments and habitudes of body, constitute only the surface part of it. This is not the whole of it. They talked of personality as consisting of different concentric zones or *koṣas*. The outermost is the material body. Next is the *prāṇa*, the different instincts and the habits built upon them. Then came the thoughts and feelings, the *manas*. These constitute the outer frame or the circumference of the personality. But there are also the *koṣas* of *vijñāna* and *ānanda*, which are the more central facts of personality, and these control and govern its circumferential formations. We find parallel ideas in some modern psychologists too. James, for example, talks of the bodily self, the social self, and the intellectual self. He arranges them in a hierarchy too. Next to the bodily self stands the social self and then the intellectual self and beyond them all is the transcendental self. Modern and ancient studies of human personality seem to converge a good deal; and

so far as Jung is concerned, this convergence becomes more evident. An important conclusion of his book is that all our explanations of personality in terms of heredity or environment or childhood conflicts prove to be inadequate. These are merest "psychological medicaments", which fail miserably in the case of genius and they fail in explaining average personality too. A centre hidden behind the apparent psychological facts seems to be a necessary supposition. A centre which integrates the diverse facts of experience and provides the true basis of uniqueness to personality.

If personality is really the supreme value in life then we are interested not only in a study of it but in finding out the ways and the means of helping its growth too. Our exposition so far confirms us in the conclusion that there is a centre in the personality, which is the true focal point of it, which constitutes its originality and its uniqueness. Now that has somehow to be made a dynamic force in life. One might ask, is it not already a dynamic force. May be, but let us see that for ourselves. Philosophers have called human personality a microcosm, a universe in miniature. It is indeed a universe and therefore a vast subject. It comprehends worlds or planes of existence and an individual has to find out for himself whether he lives at the centre of his personality or any of the outlying regions or zones of it. That requires a careful self-observation. If we live at any of the outlying parts, then evidently our identification is not with the centre of our personality. But how are we to test it? By simple instances of our behaviour? For example, when we ask somebody, what are you doing? and he says, I am sitting in a chair, then we have to enquire, what does this 'I' refer to? Does it refer to his body, to his mind or to any particular part of his body or mind? Evidently here it refers to the body. It does not apply to the mind. On the other hand, when we ask somebody why he looks rather down cast and he says that a letter had brought him bad news and he has felt very sad since then, the reference of the self is to the mind. If we thus examine our self-references, we will find very few instances where the centre is at all in contemplation. It is somewhere on the circumference that we usually sit and regard that as 'ourselves'. And when we take our stand on the circumference we are, of necessity, subject to the environment. The reverse

is also true. If, for example, we complain and suffer from the circumstances of life, if we complain (not dispassionately affirm) that the conditions are not good for congenial work, for the discharge of duties, surely we are taking a stand on the circumference. Once we take a stand at the centre we will find ourselves independent of the environment, master of it, even when we are not in a position to change it according to our will. But in no case shall we suffer from it.

The attitude of complaint, of grievance, or blaming the situation is widespread today. It is not necessary to go into the objective reasons and conditions of it. Psychologically and yogically we ourselves are responsible for our weal or woe. We suffer from circumstances when we submit to them. This is a great truth and what a vision of life and existence it gives. We can be the master of the environment, the whole realms of social tradition and of nature. We are, as it were, sufficient unto ourselves to be happy. In its fullness the vision involves the status and glory of spiritual personality.

But how is this quality of life to be achieved ? We might without much difficulty agree that the 'situation,' the external environment is primarily a field for human action and the growth of human personality. That it is essentially a means and material by which man can be helped to grow, and situations, both good and bad, can be useful. No situation, however severe and hard it may be, can kill a personality unless the personality agrees to be killed by it. Our general cultural attitude today is obviously wrong and should we be able to see the fallacy of it and choose to take the right one, we would be making the greatest contribution to the solution of our problems, whether educational, social, economic or political. Even the food problem would become less severe than it is today. But how is this new attitude, the new cultural outlook to be acquired ? It is in another form the same question of creating a new quality of personality and has obviously to be attempted at the first instance by the individuals who have clearly seen the need and the value of it. And the method of it is, in the hoary language of our country, *Yoga*.

But there is no time now to undertake an exposition of this method, of the technique of *Yoga*, to evolve the new quality of personality. We have primarily stated the problem, the true charac-

ter of personality and the need for its growth. We have treated only one part of the matter. The other part is, how is the personality to be helped to grow ? How, is the centre or the inner *koṣas* to be brought into play ? so that the supreme value of personality may be realised. That method, we have just said, is *Yoga*, and every system of it is good in some respects. However the system of Integral Yoga formulated and taught by Sri Aurobindo is a fresh and living synthesis of the best spiritual traditions of the past and an original creative impulse of present supramental experience. Sri Aurobindo's inspiration in life was primarily spiritual. When he returned from England after 14 years of study he felt a call to understand the culture of his own country, which by his father's planning had been denied to him. Those were the days when everybody was fond of English education and his father in particular had wanted that his children should grow up in that cultural atmosphere right from the beginning. And therefore Sri Aurobindo was sent to England when he was only 7 years of age. When he came back his mind turned with great vigour and energy to the understanding of Indian culture and before long he felt that the essential truth of it consisted in the perception of the spirit in life and existence. And he felt more and more drawn to it and sought a full practical experience of it. And since 1910, when he withdrew from politics, his one occupation had been the exploration and the full achievement of the spiritual truths of life and existence. And since 1926, when he achieved the status of consciousness he had aimed at, he had been engaged in helping others in the attainment of spiritual life and working for a general spiritual regeneration of mankind, in fact the realisation of divine life on earth. In the course of the long labours of this work he evolved and perfected his integral yoga. Integral yoga does not look upon *samādhi* as its sole objective. It seeks rather a change of life as a whole, in fact a change in consciousness, the outer setting of life will then automatically acquire a new meaning. Its basic principles are all psychological and the fundamental movement is aspiration for a higher, fuller and a more powerful life. But this aspiration must be sincere and must ever grow wider and deeper so as to permeate our entire conscious and subconscious life.

Evidently for a fuller understanding of the system one will have

to turn to Sri Aurobindo's books on Yoga, and his letters on the subject are indeed the best to begin with. There are any number of people who have succeeded in re-creating themselves, in discovering the joy of their life by immersing themselves deeply in the thought and inspiration of these letters. And they are also the indication and the promise of the new quality of personality we cherish so heartily.

INDRA SEN

REVIEW

THE AITAREYA UPANISHAD Tr. by *Velury Chandrasekharam*.
Pp. 31. Price Re. 1/-Personal Book Shop, 111 Mount Road, Madras 6
or the Ashram, Pondicherry.

VELURY Chandrasekharam certainly does not need introduction to students of Sri Aurobindo literature. Apart from his significant contributions in Telugu expounding the Thought of Sri Aurobindo in the light of the pristine tradition of the Veda and pure Vedanta—in which he was steeped—his Essays in English stand in a class by themselves. His brilliant summary of the *Life Divine*, within a hundred pages of inspired writing, won special appreciation from Sri Aurobindo and is easily the best book of its kind on the *magnum opus* so far. The present publication is a faithful and lucid translation of the Aitareya Upanishad (along with the text). The tone of the rendering is set in the Peace Chant itself :

“My speech is firmly held in my mind ; my mind is firmly held in my speech. O Thou who art Manifestation, be manifest unto me ! Guarding my knowledge like a lynch-pin the wheel, do not let fall away the truth taught to my ear ! By this knowledge that I learn I shall firmly hold the days and the nights. I will utter the Reality, I will utter the Truth. May that nourish me, may that nourish the Teacher. Me may that nourish, the Teacher may that nourish. Let the Peace descend.”

The entire translation is forceful and authentic with the note of the original in every line.

M. P. PANDIT



The Advent

1.1.68

Remain young,
never stop striving towards
perfection

A stylized handwritten signature consisting of a series of connected loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

The ADVENT

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None who has not been prodigal of his best has ever risen to greatness.

SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

ON 'SAVITRI'

IN her *Prayers and Meditations* the Mother says :

“Comme l’homme n’a pas voulu du repas que j’avais préparé avec tant d’amour et de soin, alors j’ai invité le Dieu à le prendre.

Et mon Dieu, Tu as accepté mon invitation et Tu es venu T’asseoir à ma table ; et en change de ma pauvre et humble offrande Tu m’as octroyé la finale libération.”¹

What is this banquet that she prepared for man and which man refused ? It is nothing else than the Life Divine here below—the life of the Gods enjoying immortality, full of the supreme light and power, love and delight. Man refused because for him it is some-

¹ “Since the man refused the meal I had prepared with so much love and care, I invoked the God to take it.

My God, Thou hast accepted my invitation, Thou hast come to sit at my table, and in exchange for my poor and humble offering Thou hast granted to me the last liberation.”

thing too high, too great. Being a creature earth-bound and of small dimensions he can seize and appreciate only small things, little specks of a material world. He refused, first of all, because of his ignorance, he does not know, nor is he capable of conceiving that there are such things as immortal life, divinity, unobscured light, griefless love, or a radiant, tranquil, invisible energy. He does not know and yet he is arrogant, arrogant in his little knowledge, his petty power, in his blind self-sufficiency. Furthermore, besides ignorance and arrogance there is an element of revolt in him, for in his half-wakefulness with his rudimentary consciousness, if ever he came in contact with something that is above and beyond him, if a shadow of another world happens to cross his threshold, he is not at peace, does not want to recognise but denies and even curses it.

The Divine Mother brings solace and salvation. For the Grace it is such a small and easy thing, it is a wonder how even such a simple, natural, inconspicuous thing could be refused by anybody.

If man finds no use for the gift she has brought down for him, naturally she will take it back and return it to Him to whom it belongs, for all things belong to the Supreme Lord, even She belongs to Him, as She is one with Him. The Gita says : there is nothing else than the Brahman in the creation—the doer, the doing and the deed, all are essentially He. In the sacrifice that is this moving, acting universe, the offerer, the offering and the offered, each and every element is the Brahman—*brahmārpanam brahma haviḥ*.

This gesture of the Divine Mother teaches us also what should be the approach and attitude of human beings in all their activities. In all our movements we should always remember Him, refer to Him, consider that in the last analysis each and every movement comes from Him and we must always offer them to Him, return them to the parent-source from where they come, therein lies freedom, the divine detachment which the individual must possess always in order to be one with Him, feel one's identity with Him.

Man's refusal of the Divine Grace has been depicted very beautifully and graphically in a perfect dramatic form by Sri

Aurobindo in *Savitri*. The refusal comes one by one from the three constituent parts of the human being. First of all man is a material being, a bodily creature, as such he is a being of ignorance and misery, of brutish blindness. He does not know that there is something other than his present state of misfortune and dark fate. He is not even aware that there may be anything higher or nobler than the ugliness he is steeped in. He lives on earth-life with an earth-consciousness, moves mechanically and helplessly through vicissitudes over which he has no control. Even so the material life is not a mere despicable thing ; behind its darkness, behind its sadness, behind all its infirmities, the Divine Mother is there upholding it and infusing into it her grace and beauty. Indeed, she is one with this world of sorrows, she has in effect become it in her infinite pity and love so that this material body of hers may become conscious of its divine substance and manifest her true form. But the human being individualised and separated in egoistic consciousness has lost the sense of its inner reality and is vocal only in regard to its outward formulation. It is natural for physical man therefore to reject and deny the physical Godhead in him, he even curses it and wants to continue as he is. He yells therefore in ignorance and anguish :

I am the Man of Sorrows, I am he
 Who is nailed on the wide cross of the Universe...
 I toil like the animal, like the animal die.
 I am man the rebel, man the helpless serf...
 I know my fate will ever be the same,
 It is my Nature's work that cannot change.
 I was made for evil, evil is my lot ;
 Evil I must be and by evil live ;
 Naught other can I do, but be myself ;
 What Nature made, that I must remain.¹

The Divine glory manifests itself for a moment to the earthly consciousness but man refuses to be pulled out of its pig-sty. The Grace withdraws but in its Supreme Consciousness of unity and love

¹ *Savitri* : VII. 4. Pages 574-6.

consoles the fallen creature and gives it the assurance :

One day I will return, a bringer of strength...
 Misery shall pass abolished from the Earth,
 The world shall be freed from the anger of the Beast.¹

The basic status or foundation of Man, in fact of creation, is earth, the material organisation. After the body, next comes the life and Life-power. Here man attains a larger dynamic being of energy and creative activity. Here too, on this level, what man is or what he achieves is only a reflection, a shadow, but mostly a misshapen resemblance, an aberration of the divine reality that hides behind, and yet half-reveals itself. That Godhead is the Mother's form of Might, we name it variously, Kali and Durga and Lakshmi, for it is Her Grace that is ultimately expressed and fulfilled in this world of vital power. It is because of this realising power of the Mother that

Slowly the Light grows greater in the East,
 Slowly the world progresses on God's road.
 His seal is on my task, it cannot fail ;
 I shall hear the silver swing of heaven's gates
 When God comes out to meet the soul of the world.²

But man in the strength of his ignorance and arrogance does not recognise this Goddess. Human power, we have said, is a reflection, a shadow of the Divine Power but most often it is a deformed, a perverted Divine Power. Man is full of his egoistic vital self-confidence : he believes it is his own will that is realising all, all which is achieved here ; whatever he had created, it is through the might of his own merit and whatever new creations will be done in the future will be through the Grace of his own genius. A mighty vital selfhood obscures his consciousness and he sees nothing else, understands nothing else beyond the reach of that limited vision. This is the Rakshasa, this is the Asura in man. Here is his philosophy of life :

¹ *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 576.

² *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 579.

I climb, a claimant to the throne of heaven.
 The last born of the earth, I stand the first...
 I am God, still unevolved in human form ;
 Even if He is not, He becomes in me...
 No magic can surpass my magic skill.
 There is no miracle I shall not achieve.¹

So this vital being in man in his Rakshasic hunger and Asuric self-conceit rejects the Divine Power that is in fact behind him too, supporting him. The Goddess, in the wake of her predecessor, goes back from where she came, leaving however a consoling word, assuring that one day she will return ; she will bide her time. For one day,

The cry of the ego shall be hushed within,
 Its lion-roar that claims the world as food.
 All shall be might and bliss and happy force.²

In his body man is the beast, in the vital he is the Rakshasa and the Asura, he rises now into the mind. And in the mind he is the human being proper, he has attained his own humanity. Here he has received the light of knowledge, a wider and deeper consciousness, he has unveiled the secret mysteries of Nature, brought to play hidden forces that were unknown and untapped. All these achievements have been possible for man because it is the Mother of Light that is behind and has come forward to shed something of her luminous presence around. But man has no inkling of the presence of this luminous Deity, his own light has been a screen in front of the inner divine light. It is not possible for the human mind to seize the higher light : his consciousness, his knowledge is too narrow, too superficial, too dull to comprehend what is beyond. This Divine Light is also a thing of delight, the consciousness it possesses is also the very essence of Joy and Felicity. But all that is occult to the human knowledge. Man considers Truth is his property, whatever truth is there, his understanding can grasp and bring to play. Truth

¹ *Savitri* : VII. 4. Pages 580-2.

² *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 583.

and Reality are commensurate with his own consciousness, his mental comprehension. What others speak of as realities of the spirit, truths transcendental, are an illusion and delusion. This is what is usually known as the scientific mind, the rational consciousness. An orthodox scientific mentality is in the first instance a thing of overweening self-confidence, of arrogant self-assertion. It declares in its formidable pride :

I have seized the cosmic energies for my use,
 I have pored on her infinitesimal elements
 And her invisible atoms have unmasked...
 If God is at work, his secrets I have found.¹

This imperiousness in man seems however to be a sheer imperiousness : it is a mask, a hollow appearance ; for with all his knowledge, at the end he has attained no certainty, no absoluteness. There is something behind, all the outer bravado he flourishes has a sense of helplessness, at times almost as pitiable as that of a child ; for he finds at last

All is a speculation or a dream :
 In the end the world itself becomes a doubt.²

It is true, his survey of the universe, his knowledge of boundless Nature and the inexhaustible multiplicities of creation have given him a sense of the endless and the infinite but he has not the necessary light or capacity to follow those lines of infinity, on the contrary, there is a shrinking in him at the touch of such vastnesses ; his small humanity makes him desperately earth-bound, his aspiration follows the lines of least resistance :

Our smallness saves us from the Infinite.
 In a frozen grandeur lone and desolate
 Call me not to die the great Eternal death...

¹ *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 589.

² *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 589.

Human I am, human let me remain.
Till in the Inconscient I fall dumb and sleep.¹

Thus, this Goddess too, is rejected like her previous comrades, the Mother of Light, the Deity who is properly the guide and ruler of man's own destiny. Even she is refused but hers is not to complain, in tranquil quietness she brings comfort and hope to the troubled human mind and says she goes to come back in the fullness of her incarnation. She utters divinely :

One day I shall return, His hands in mine,
And thou shalt see the face of the Absolute.
Then shall the holy marriage be achieved.
Then shall the divine family be born.²

3

To the inconscient and ignorant human nature, Savitri, the Divine's delegate presents the powers and personalities that are behind man's present infirmities—these broken images of true realities lying scattered about in the front of existence. Man will be made conscious, he is being made conscious step by step precisely by such relations from time to time. The Vedic image is that of the eternal succession of dawns whose beginning no one knows, nor the end, that creation proceeds from light to light, from consciousness to higher reaches of consciousness. From the material life through the vital and the mental life he first reaches the spiritual life and finally the Life Divine. From the animal he rises to manhood, and in the end to Godhood.

But there are intermediaries. The fullness of the realisation depends on the fullness of the incarnation. The Evil in the body, the Evil in the vital, the Evil in the mind are, whatever their virulence and intransigence, subsidiary agents, for they serve only a mightier Lord. The first original Sin is Death, the God of Denial,

¹ *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 590.

² *Savitri* : VII. 4. Page 591.

of non-existence. That is the very source—*fons et origo*—the fount and origin of all the misfortune, the fate that terrestrial life involves. This demon, this anti-Divine has to be tracked and destroyed or dissolved into its original origin. This is the Nihil that negates the Divine—*Asat* that seeks to nullify *Sat* and that has created this world of ignorance and misery, that is to say, in its outward pragmatic form. So Savitri sees the one source and knows the remedy. Therefore she pursues death, pursues him to the end, that is, to the end of death. The luminous energy of the Supreme faces now its own shadow and blazes it up. The flaming Light corrodes into the substance of the darkness and makes of it her own transfigured substance. This then is the gift that Savitri brings to man, the Divine's own immortality, transfusing the mortality that reigns now upon earth.

In view of the necessity of the age, for the crucial, critical and, in a way, final consummation of Nature's evolutionary urge, the Divine Himself has to come down in the fullness of His divinity; for only then can the earth be radically changed and wholly transformed. In the beginning the Divine once came down, but by sacrificing himself, being pulverised, scattered and lost in the infinitesimals of a universal, material, unconsciousness. Once again he has to come down, but this time in the supreme glory of his victorious Lumino-sity.

This then is the occult, the symbolic sense of the Mother's gesture turning away from man with her gifts and returning to the Divine himself, and inviting him as the chief guest of honour upon this earth. Or, in the Vedic image, he is to come as the flaming front and leader of the journeying sacrifice that is this universal existence.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM :

(VI) THE EMERGENCE OF TERRORISM

SIR LOUIS DANE ON TERRORISM

THE amazing lecture given by the Satrap of the Punjab to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and the other gentlemen who were ill-advised enough to approach him with their expressions of loyalty and of abhorrence at the Nasik murder, is a sample of the kind of thing Moderate politicians may expect when they approach the bureaucracy with their "co-operation". What it is precisely that the various Satraps want of their long-suffering allies, we cannot conjecture. Some seem to want, like Sir George Clarke, the entire cessation of political agitation, because the political agitator is the spiritual grand-uncle of the political assassin. Others seem to want the entire Indian community to leave their ordinary avocations and turn detectives, in order to supply the deficiencies of that costly police force through which the bureaucracy governs the country. But Sir Louis Dane's diatribe seems difficult to account for except on the supposition that he is a disciple of Hare Street and believes that the whole population of India, from the Maharaja of Darbhanga to the grocer and the shoemaker, know the personality, intentions, plans and secret operations of the Terrorists and conceal them from Government out of innate cussedness or invincible sympathy with the assassins. It is difficult to have patience with the insensate folly which persists in these delusions and, by lumping all political agitation into one category, does its best to bring about the calamity which it imagines. The fewer rulers like Sir Louis there are in this country, the better for the nation and the Government ; for they are the best allies that Terrorism has.

THE BANERJI VIGILANCE COMMITTEES

The novel departure initiated by the fertile mind of Sriji Surenranath Banerji at Barrackpur in the creation of Vigilance Committees to check the nocturnal lovers of bomb and bullet practice on the E.B.S.R. has created great interest and amusement among his countrymen. There are many who are ungenerous enough to attribute this anti-Anarchical zeal less to loyalty and a noble "Co-operative" instinct than to the fact that our great leader has himself to travel daily over the zone of danger. Even if it were so, the sneer is ungenerous. We all love our lives, we have all to travel occasionally by the E.B.S.R. in first or second class and we cannot ignore the fact that random bullets and explosive cocoanuts are no respecters of persons and, if they find the head even of a Nationalist leader in the way, will not be polite enough to walk round it. We shall all therefore be grateful to our old man eloquent, if he can ensure our common safety. But for ourselves we do not see how he can effect his laudable object. It would be possible for Sriji Surenranath and the other estimable burgesses of Barrackpur to patrol the railway at night, but the weather is still cold, sleep is pleasant, bullets and cocoanuts perilous missiles, and, if anything happens, the police are quite capable of suspecting and arresting the too vigilant patrons of the public peace. One might revive the 'National Volunteers' for the purpose; but the Samities are disbanded, students forbidden to take part in politics or do anything that would interfere with their studies. They are not likely to be enthusiastic for this kind of volunteer work under these conditions. And, if such organisations were created, it would be more likely to alarm than gratify a suspicious and nervous Government which might see in it a disingenuous device for reviving the proclaimed Samities. The only other resource is for these novel vigilance men to turn detective, discover the Terrorists and give information to the police which they can only do by becoming agent provocators and so warming themselves into the confidence of their quarry. That is a kind of dirty work no Indian gentleman is likely to undertake even with the prospect of vindicating his loyalty, escaping housesearches and deportation and earning the encomiums of the *Englishman*,

THE HIGH COURT ASSASSINATION

The startling assassination of Deputy Superintendent Shamsul-Alam on Monday in the precincts of the High Court, publicly, in day-light, under the eyes of many and in a crowded building, breaks the silence which had settled on the country, in a fashion which all will deplore. The deceased officer was perhaps the ablest, most energetic and most zealous member of the Bengal Detective Force. It was his misfortune that he took the leading part not only in the Alipore Bomb Case in which he zealously and untiringly assisted the crown solicitors, but in the investigation of the Haludbari and Netra dacoities. The nature of his duties exposed him to the resentment of the small Terrorist bodies whose continued existence in Bengal is proved by this last daring and reckless crime. Under such circumstances a man carries his life in his hand and it seems only a matter of time when it will be struck from him. We have no doubt that the Government will suitably recognise his services by a handsome provision for his family. As for crime itself, it is one of the boldest of the many bold acts of violence for which the Terrorists have been responsible. We wish we could agree with some of our contemporaries that the perpetrators of these deplorable outrages are dastards and cowards ; for if it were so, Terrorism would be a thing to be abhorred, but not feared. On the contrary, the Indian Terrorist seems to be usually a man fanatical in his determination and daring, to prefer public places and crowded buildings for his field and to scorn secrecy and a fair chance of escape. It is this remarkable feature which has distinguished alike the crimes at Nasik, London, Calcutta, to say nothing of the assassination of Gossain in jail. With such men it is difficult to deal. Neither fear nor reasoning, disapprobation nor isolation can have any effect on them. Nor will the Government of this country allow us to use what we believe to be the only effective measure of combating the spread of the virus among the people. All we can do is to sit with folded hands and listen to the senseless objurgations of the Anglo-Indian Press, waiting for a time when the peaceful expression and organisation of our national aspirations will no longer be penalised. It is then that Terrorism will vanish from the country and the nightmare be as if it never had been,

ANGLO-INDIAN PRESCRIPTIONS

The Anglo-Indian papers publish those usual senseless prescriptions for the cure of the evil. The *Englishman* informs us that it is at last tired of these outrages and asks in a tone full of genuine weariness when the Government will take the steps which Hare Street has always been advising. It seems to us that the Government have gone fairly far in that direction. The only remaining steps are to silence the Press entirely, abolish the necessity of investigation and trial and deport every public man of India. And when by removing everything and everyone that still encourages the people to persevere in peaceful political agitation, Russia has been reproduced in India and all is hushed except the noise of the endless duel between the omnipotent policemen and the secret assassin, the *Englishman* will be satisfied,—but the country will not be at peace. The *Indian Daily News* more sensibly suggests police activity in detecting secret organisations,—although its remarks would have sounded better without an implied prejudgement of the Nasik case. If the police were to employ the sound detective methods employed in England and France, it would take them a little longer to effect a coup, but there would be some chance of real success. It is not by indiscriminate arrests, harassing house-searches undertaken on the word of informers paid so much for each piece of information true or false, and interminable detention of undertrial prisoners in jail that these formidable secret societies will be uprooted. Such processes are more likely to swell their numbers and add to their strength. The *Statesman* is particularly wroth with the people of this country for their objection to police methods and goes so far as to lay the blame for the murder of Sam-sul-Alam on these objections. If we had only submitted cheerfully to police harassment, all this would not have happened! The bitter ineptitude of our contemporary grows daily more pronounced and takes more and more refuge in ridiculously inconsequent arguments. Is it the objectionable methods or our objections to them that are to blame? We may safely say that, whatever influences may have been at work in the mind of the assassin, the occasional criticisms of vexatious house-search in the Bengal journals had nothing to do with his action. The *States-*

man does not scruple, like other Anglo-Indian papers, to question the sincerity of the condemnations of Terrorist outrage which are now-a-days universal throughout the country, and to support its insinuations it has to go as far back as the Gossain murder and the demonstrations that followed it. These demonstrations were not an approval of Terrorism as a policy, but an outburst of gratitude to the man who removed a dangerous and reckless perjurer whose evil breath was scattering ruin and peril over innocent homes and blameless heads throughout Bengal. We do not praise or justify that outburst,—for murder is murder, whatever its motives,—but it is not fair to give it a complexion other than the one it really wore. If it had really been true that a whole nation approved of Terrorism and supported the assassin by secret or open sympathy, it would be more damning indictment of British statesmanship in India than any seditious pen could frame. The Chowringhee paper's libellous insinuation that the secret societies are not secret and their members are known to the public, has only to be mentioned in order to show the spirit of this gratuitous adviser of the Indian people. Nor can one praise without a smile the suggestion that the Hindu community should use the weapon of social ostracism against the Terrorists. Whom are we to outcaste, the hanged or transported assassin, or his innocent relatives ?

THE PARTY OF REVOLUTION

Be the fault whose you will, ours or the Government's, the existence of an organised party of armed Revolution in Indian politics is now a recognised factor of the situation. The enormous strides with which events have advanced and a sky full of trouble but also of hope been overcast and grown full of gloom and menace, can be measured by the rapidity with which this party has developed. It is only five years since the national movement sprung into being. The cry was then for self-help and passive resistance. Boycott, Swadeshi, Arbitration, National Education, were the hope of the future, the means of self-regeneration. In five years everything has been struck to the earth. Boycott has almost disappeared, Swadeshi anguishes under sentence of arrest, Arbitration died still-born, National

Education is committing suicide. A tremendous disintegration has taken place and we look amazed on the ruins of the work our labour, our sacrifice erected. It is a huge defeat, an astonishing catastrophe. And on those ruins grim, wild-eyed, pitiless to itself and to others, mocking at death and defeat with its raucous and careless laughter Revolution rises repeating the language of the old-world insurgents, cherishing a desperate hope which modern conditions deny, grasping at the weapons which the Slav and the Celts have brought into political warfare. The seed which the *Yugantar* sowed in its brief, violent and meteoric career have borne fruit in unexpected quarters and new-born journals repeat in foreign lands and in the English tongue the incitations to revolt and slaughter which have been put down by the strong hand in India of the law. Money is forthcoming to support a journalism which must obviously be all cost and no profit, young men exile themselves from their native land by openly joining the party of violence and in India itself repeated blows have been struck paralysing the hope and the effort to revive the activity of that broader and calmer Nationalism which, recognising modern conditions, still commands the allegiance of the bulk of the nation.

ITS GROWTH

What is the precise nature, propaganda and strength of this party, which by so small an expenditure of energy has produced such surprising results? When the *Yugantar*, abandoning its habit of philosophic Revolutionism first began to enter the field of practical politics, to sneer at passive resistance and grid at its chief exponents, no one thought that its change of attitude pretended anything serious. Men read the paper for the amazing brilliance, grace and sustained force of its style, a new thing in Bengali journalism, and from the natural attraction men feel for strong writing and bold thought even when they do not agree with it. Afterwards the reckless fight of the *Yugantar* for existence attracted a more dangerous admiration and from that time the journal changed from a thing of literary interest into a political force. Even then it was taken as a practical guide only among a section of young men small in numbers and without means or influence. But things have

changed since then. A void has been created by the conviction, deportation, self-imposed exile or silence of the great Nationalist speakers, writers, organisers, and the dangerous opinions and activities then created have rushed in to occupy the vacuum. The Nationalism we advocate is a thing difficult to grasp and follow, needing continual intellectual exposition to keep its hold on the mind, continual inspiration and encouragement to combat the impatience natural to humanity ; its methods are comparatively new in politics and can only justify themselves to human conservatism by distinguished and sustained success. The preaching of the new revolutionary party is familiar to human imagination, supported by the records of some of the most inspiring episodes in history, in consonance with the impatience, violence and passion for concrete results which revolutionary epochs generate. The growing strength of this party is not difficult to explain ; it is extremely difficult to combat.

ITS EXTENT

This party has two sides, the propaganda carried on in foreign countries, and the Terrorist activity always recrudescing in our midst. The latter is the most formidable in the present, the former the most dangerous in the future. The foreign propaganda was first located in London and confined to the single paper, the *Indian Sociologist*, first an organ of Shyamji Krishnavarma's Home Rule Society and opposed to all methods of violence. The conversion of Krishnavarma to the Terrorism he once fiercely condemned, has been a very important factor in the growth of the new party. The propaganda has been driven from London only to spring at once into an ubiquitous activity abroad. From Paris Krishnavarma publishes the *Indian Sociologist* ; from Berlin a new organ, significantly self-styled the *Talwar*, issues ; in Geneva a paper naming itself the "Bande Mataram" busies itself with decrying the policy of the defunct "Bande Mataram" and denouncing its originator and former Editor; a paper called the *Free Hindustan* maintains itself in America. Wealthy men and women stand behind these organs, the Kathiawar Krishnavarma, the Parsi lady Mrs. Kama and possibly others who do not advertise their names. Young men of all nationalities in

India seem to have joined these organisations and occasional pamphlets find their way into India in spite of the vigilance of the Post Office by means familiar to European revolutionism. In India any violent propoganda is possible; violent action takes its place and the swift succession of attempted or successful outrages in Guzerat, Maharastra, Punjab and Bengal show that if the movement is not organised, as in these foreign countries, it is equally widespread. The very existence of such a conspiracy must paralyse all other forms and methods of national aspiration by driving the Government and the Anglo-Indian community into the suppression of everything that goes beyond contented accepptance of that which exists. The revolutionists know this well and they have played their game with great skill and success.

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

XII

I play chess upon the board of Grace :	1
With the consciousness of the Guru I won the world-game.	2
I crushed the Two and seized the King.	3
The Guide directing I came by the city of victory.	4
The first thing to do, pursue and slay the pawns,	5
Then lift the Knight and kill the five ;	6
By the Queen, the King is dethroned, disabled, the world-power is won.	7
Kanhu says, "I am an expert thrower of dice :	8
And I count and capture all the sixty-four squares."	9

Notes :

- 1 The Grace abounding spread everywhere, which always helps the sadhak and ensures the victory.
- 3 Two=Duality (*dvandvas*). One must be *dvandvātīta*, beyond the dualities and divisions to find the supreme unity.
King=the Ego (Ahamkar)
- 4 Guide=Antaryamin, the Inner Ruler.
- 5 Pawns=ignorant instincts. Samskaras.
- 6 Knight=the vital Power guiding instincts.
Five=the senses.
- 7 Queen=the Divine Consciousness-Power. Chit-Shakti.
King=the ignorant being (Purusha) that normally rules the ignorant nature.
- 9 64 squares=fullness, integrality of life. Kali, Mother Nature is said to have 64 yoginis, powers and instruments. There are also 64 arts (Kalas) embellishing a full life.

XIII

The threefold adherence is the boat and there are	
eight rooms in it.	1
My own body is the Compassion, the dwelling	
inside is emptiness	2
I have crossed the world-ocean as through a	
vain dream.	3
When within the boat, my mind dwells on the	
waves as a witness :	4
The five luminous Beings are made the oars ;	5
Ply your boat, this body of yours, O Kanhu, through	
the mazes of Maya :	6
Touch and taste and smell shall remain as they are,	7
Even like a sleepless dream,	8
With his consciousness holding the helm through	
the Void,	9
Kanhu moves towards the confluence of the Supreme	
Delight.	10

Notes :

- Line 1 Threefold Adherence : to the Truth, the Guru, and the Divine Family (Dharma, Buddha, Samgha).
Eight Rooms=the seven planes of consciousness (Sat-chit-ananda-mahas-manas-prana-anna) and the Supreme.
- 2 The Buddha consciousness : within, it is nothingness, outside it is compassion incarnate.
- 5 luminous beings=illumined senses.
- 8 sleepless=conscious, not unconscious, vigilant.
dream=unreality, from the spiritual consciousness.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

PAST MEMORIES

NOWADAYS one reads of the use of hypnotism in curing illnesses. There are reports of the hypnotist replacing the anaesthetist in the operation theatre. The other day I heard of an eminent doctor in the Services trying this technique of putting a strong suggestion on the patient that there would be no pain. Repeated suggestion did its work and the doctor found that he could do away with the use of the anaesthetic. The results encouraged him to continue with his experiments till one day the patient on the table suddenly started shouting with pain half-way through the operation. Naturally steps were immediately taken to bring in anaesthetics but the doctor experienced immediately an unaccountable drain of energy from himself. Obviously the being of the patient had rejected the thought-suggestion at some stage and that thought-formation came back and hit the doctor with the attendant results. One never knows when the suggestion fails or gets rejected and the spell is broken. There are so many factors at play in such situations.¹

This incident comes to my mind as I read a press cutting sent by a friend from the United States. It speaks of a doctor curing chronic illnesses by hypnotic means. He makes the patients *regress* in their consciousness : he takes them backwards and still more backwards, questions them, and in the process, gets the cue to the causes of their persistent sicknesses. Thus far it is quite understandable. Now, the report adds, the doctor has teamed up with a lady of 'psychic abilities' who can take back the memory to previous incarnations. She has, we are told, "the technique of being able to relive an earlier incarnation in detail and as a deliberate exercise." Jointly, they are now "regressing patients beyond birth, until they were describing traumatic experience or death-scenes hundreds of years earlier, which seemingly triggered their present fears."

¹ If somehow this technique is perfected it can be used with great advantage. For even when the waking consciousness of the patient is dulled to the point of feeling no pain, the physical body as such does receive a shock during the operation. But if the body were to be persuaded to accept the suggestion, then, I am inclined to think, this shock could be avoided.

It all reads very well, indeed, but I am afraid anyone who knows something of the process of embodiment—life, death and after—can only smile at the naivete of it. For, when the soul leaves the physical body at death, it departs in its subtle body consisting of the subtle-physical, the vital and the mental sheaths. The memory of the receding life is stored mainly in the vital sheath and that gets dissolved in the vital plane before the soul is free to proceed to its place of rest. And once the vital sheath or body is dissolved, the vivid memories that stuck to it are also gone. What remains of the past is only the essence of the experiences of that embodiment in the soul—the psychic being. And this essence represents what was lived during the high moments in which the soul came out of its veil and participated in the experience. The soul remembers such climactic experiences, but very little of the surrounding circumstances is preserved. Details of the past lives are not relevant for the soul's growth—and growth is the real purpose of repeated births—, hence they do not form part of drawable memory. Furthermore, it is also a part of Nature's process to put away the past memories as they tend to interfere with the purpose of the present incarnation. This is the normal procedure.

No doubt I would be reminded of the many reports in newspapers of children becoming suddenly aware of their past birth, recalling incidents and connections with astonishing and verifiable exactitude. But these are clearly cases of aberration, exceptional turn-backs of the soul under the pulls of the vital being from half-way in transit. The being returns prematurely, even before the past memories have had time or reached the conditions for their dissolution. Indian tradition discourages such returns and most of the post-obsequial rites are intended to prevent such unnatural throw-backs and to speed up the journey to the place of rest. To spotlight abnormal cases of past memories in order to prove or disprove 'scientifically' the truth of reincarnation, as some of the modern psychologists and para-psychologists are doing today, is a very unhealthy and morbid preoccupation. It harms the individual and deepens the chaos. However, to come back to the subject, happenings of this type are not the rule. One does not remember these *details*. Usually it is the vital imagination, either of oneself or of some one else that takes the form

of these dramatic accounts.¹ They have no value in truth—spiritual or occult.

Similarly fanciful is the belief of the doctors under mention (in the press cutting) that the Beatniks, Hippies and other modern young men in revolt against society are reincarnations of servicemen killed in World War II, men “who brought back with them their rage against adult bungling that prematurely ended their lives.” While it is possible that in a few individual cases, strong passions and hatreds choose another physical innings to work themselves out, as a rule they are left in the vital zone where they either spend themselves or are utilised by the local denizens for their purposes. The departing souls do not carry these gusts with them for their subsequent embodiment. The dynamics of reincarnation operate on a totally different basis.

PRABUDDHA

¹ I do not speak here of the part played by the entities of the subtler worlds in misleading people when they dabble in such fields without adequate knowledge or power.

THE SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

VII. THE ISSUE : STATUS OR DYNAMIS

I have met Spirit with spirit, Self with self,
But I have loved too the body of my God.

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, p. 728)

Nature shall live to manifest secret God,
The Spirit shall take up the human play,
This earthly life become the life divine.

(*Ibid.*, Book XI Canto I, p. 798)

Eternal status and eternal dynamis are both true of the Reality which itself surpasses both status and dynamis ; the immobile and the mobile Brahman are both the same Reality.

(Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 411)

We have to possess consciously the active Brahman without losing possession of the silent Self. We have to preserve the inner silence, tranquillity, passivity as a foundation ; but in place of an aloof indifference to the works of the active Brahman we have to arrive at an equal and impartial delight in them ; in place of a refusal to participate lest our freedom and peace be lost we have to arrive at a conscious possession of the active Brahman whose joy of existence does not abrogate His peace, nor His lordship of all workings impair His calm freedom in the midst of His works.

(Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 463).

THE discussion in the preceding chapter has made the point clear that since our Yoga aims at the realisation of the Divine in the outer consciousness and life as well as in the inner one, the Jivanmukta with his aloof indifference to or at the best a benevolent

tolerance for the dynamic waking existence can never be our ideal.

But what are after all the essential difficulties of spiritual realisation on the gross physical plane ? Why is the life of action and creation viewed with so much misgiving by most of the traditional spiritual seekers ? What makes our present worldly existence apparently so incorrigible in its nature as to induce even Sri Krishna, the propounder of the gospel of divine action, to almost admit at the end that to shun this transient and unhappy world is perhaps after all the best possible solution ?¹

And what about that wonderfully dynamic saint Swami Vivekananda ? Did he not at the end give the simile of a dog's tail in order to represent the impossibility of transformation ? Alas, straighten it as much as you like, but release it—and the moment after, the wretched thing becomes curled again ! It looks almost an irony of situation that this dynamic personality who did not flinch to declare in the earlier part of his Yogic life :

“I have lost all wish for my salvation, may I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum-total of all souls,—and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species is the special object of my worship.”²

—should almost abdicate and confess just two years before his passing away :

“I have bundled my things and am waiting for the great deliverer.”

“Shiva, O Shiva, carry my boat to the other shore.”

“After all, I am only the boy who used to listen with rapt wonderment to the wonderful words of Ramakrishna under the Banyan at Dakshineswar. That is my true nature ; works and activities, doing good and so forth are all superimpositions. Now I again hear his voice ; the same old voice thrilling my soul. Bonds are breaking—love dying, *work becoming tasteless*—the glamour is off life. Only the voice of the Master is calling.—‘I come, Lord, I come’. ‘Let the dead bury the dead, follow thou me.’—‘I come, my beloved Lord, I come.’

¹ *anityamasukham lokam imam tyaktvā.*

² Quoted by Sri Aurobindo in *The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp. 309-10,

"Yes, I come. Nirvana is before me. I feel it at times—the same infinite ocean of peace, without a ripple, a breath...

"The sweetest moments of my life have been when I was drifting; *I am drifting again*—with the bright warm sun ahead and masses of vegetation around—and in the heat everything is so still, so still, so calm—and I am drifting languidly—in the warm heart of the river! *I dare not make a splash with my hands or feet—for fear of breaking the marvellous stillness*, stillness that makes you feel sure it is an illusion.

"*Behind my work was ambition, behind my love was personality, behind my purity was fear, behind my guidance the thirst for power!* Now they are vanishing, and I drift. I come! Mother, I come! In Thy warm bosom, floating wheresoever Thou takest me, in the voiceless, in the strange, in the wonderland, I come—a spectator, no more an actor."¹ (Italics ours).

Are then actions and creations such great binding elements as to be obligatorily left out at the end? Did not Sri Ramakrishna give the image of a pregnant woman whose work-load diminishes day by day?

But the difficulty experienced by a spiritual seeker in guarding the peace of the silent Self while engaged in dynamic activity is more incidental than intrinsic. It arises out of the mental being's exclusive concentration on its "plane of pure existence in which consciousness is at rest in passivity and delight of existence at rest in peace of existence."² Because of this exclusiveness, when the Mind seeks at times to ally itself to action, in the absence of adequate preparation it plunges headlong into the old obscuring movement of force instead of swaying a conscious mastery over it.

It is because of this ignorant relapse brought about by the dynamic play that the mental Purusha is so ready to condemn all action and dynamism. To its judgment, all dynamism must be foreign to the supreme nature of the Absolute whose only true and whole being must be a status silent and immutable, featureless and quiescent. Thus cancelling the dynamis of Brahman, the Mind goes on to

¹ Swami Vivekananda, *Complete Works*, Vol. VI, pp. 432-434.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 464.

assert that this supreme Reality can at all be realised only through a consciousness that has itself fallen non-active and silent and, what is more, "liberation must destroy all possibility of mental or bodily living and annihilate the individual existence for ever in an impersonal infinity."¹

But we shall presently see that none of the foregoing assumptions is absolutely valid. As a matter of fact, all the difficulty disappears if along with the plane of pure existence one can embrace the plane of conscious force of existence, the Chit-Tapas, of Sachchidananda, in which "consciousness is active as power and will and delight is active as joy of existence."²

And this is possible. Because Brahman Itself is integral, It has an active aspect as well as a static one and both are equally real. The integral realisation demands the realisation of Sachchidananda in both His aspects, in the aspect in which He is "sovereign, free, lord of things, acting out of an inalienable calm, pouring itself out in infinite action and quality out of an eternal self-concentration, the one supreme Person holding in himself all this play of personality in a vast equal impersonality, possessing the infinite phenomenon of the universe without attachment but without any inseparable aloofness, with a divine mastery and an innumerable radiation of his eternal luminous self-delight—as a manifestation which he holds, but by which he is not held, which he governs freely and by which therefore he is not bound,"³ as well as in that in which He is "silent passive quietistic, self-absorbed, self-sufficient,...one, impersonal, without play of qualities, turned away from the infinite phenomenon of the universe or viewing it with indifference and without participation."⁴

We have said that the eternal status of being as well as the eternal movement of being are both real of the supreme Reality. But the question arises : can these two statuses co-exist? Are these *simultaneously* realisable? Or, rather, one has to withdraw from one of the statuses in order to realise the other, so much so that, depending

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 501.

² *Ibid.*, p. 464.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 447.

on the status on which one concentrates at the moment, one of these may appear to be the inertia of repose while the other the inertia of mechanical repetition of movement.

An integral spiritual realisation affirms that the eternal status and the eternal dynamis are not only both *real* but they are also *simultaneous*. 'The status admits of action of dynamis and the action does not abrogate the status.' Thus "all that is in the kinesis, the movement, the action, the creation, is the Brahman; the becoming is a movement of the being ; Time is a manifestation of the Eternal. All is one Being, one Consciousness, one even in infinite multiplicity, and there is no need to bisect it into an opposition of transcendent Reality and unreal cosmic Maya."¹

But the difficulty is that it is often trenchantly asserted as a *spiritual fact of experience* that the Reality is indeed featureless and immutable and the universe of manifestation is brought about by the illusionary Maya-Power of the Supreme. Although this assertion that the only active Power the absolute Truth possesses is that of creating illusion and falsehood and 'dissolving and disowning' them in turn lacks in vraisimilitude, the rejoinder is made that this is not a question of vraisemblance or no, nor is it an issue that can be settled by means of logical validation or otherwise, for this is the ineffable mystery of Maya (*anirvacanīyā*) not to be comprehended by reason or mind.

And this position is sound indeed. For, whatever the merits or demerits, the strong or weak points, of a particular philosophical formulation, the spiritual experience that it seeks to represent remains in itself eternally valid and can only be integrated in the compass of another experience much more wider and much more loftier. For, as Sri Aurobindo has so forcefully pointed out, "a single decisive spiritual experience may undo a whole edifice of reasonings and conclusions erected by the logical intelligence."²

So, instead of engaging in sterile intellectual debates, in this matter of the reality or otherwise of the dynamis of the Absolute, let us listen to Sri Aurobindo describing his own personal spiritual realisation :

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 413.

² *Ibid.*, p. 420.

"The solution of the matter must rest not upon logic, but upon a growing, ever heightening, widening spiritual experience—an experience which must of course include or have passed through that of Nirvana and Maya, *otherwise it would not be complete and would have no decisive value.*

"Now to reach Nirvana was the first radical result of my own Yoga. It threw me suddenly into a condition above and without thought, unstained by any mental or vital movement ; there was no ego, *no real world*—only when one looked through the immobile senses, something perceived or bore upon its sheer silence a world of empty forms, *materialised shadows without true substance.* There was no One or many even, only just absolutely That, featureless, relationless, sheer, indescribable, unthinkable, absolute, yet supremely real and *solely real.* This was no mental realisation nor something glimpsed somewhere above,—no abstraction,—it was positive, *the only positive reality*—although not a spatial physical world, pervading, occupying or rather flooding and drowning this semblance of a physical world, leaving no room or space for any reality but itself, allowing nothing else to seem at all actual, positive or substantial...What it (the experience) brought was an inexpressible Peace, a stupendous Silence, an infinity of release and freedom. I lived in that Nirvana day and night before it began to admit other things into itself or modify itself at all, and the inner heart of experience, a constant memory of it and its power to return remained until in the end it began to disappear *into a greater Super-consciousness from above.* But meanwhile realisation added itself to realisation and fused itself with this original experience. At an early stage *the aspect of an illusionary world gave place* to one in which illusion¹ is only a small surface phenomenon with an immense Divine Reality behind it and a supreme Divine Reality above it and an intense Divine Reality in the heart of everything that had seemed at first only a cinematic shape or shadow. And this was *no reimprisonment in the senses, no diminution or fall* from supreme experience, it came rather as a constant heightening and widening of the Truth ;

¹ Sri Aurobindo's own note : "In fact it is not an illusion in the sense of an imposition of something baseless and unreal on the consciousness, but a misrepresentation by the conscious mind and sense and falsifying misuse of manifested existence."

it was the Spirit that saw objects, not the senses, and the Peace, the Silence, the freedom in Infinity remained always with the world or all worlds only as a continuous incident in the timeless eternity of the Divine.

"...Nirvana in my liberated consciousness turned out to be the beginning of my realisation, *a first step towards the complete thing*, not the sole true attainment possible or even a culminating finale."¹ (Italics ours)

The world is thus real, the Becoming is as real as the Being, the dynamis of Sachchidananda is as much a spiritual fact as His immobile status. Indeed, the Divine does not contain all only in 'a transcendent consciousness'. He is the one Self of all, *sarvabhūtāntarātmā*, He is the All, *vāsudeva sarvam*, not merely in the 'unique essence' but in the manifold names and forms. "All the soul-life, mental, vital, bodily existence of all that exists [is] one indivisible movement and activity of the Being who is the same for ever."² "All is one Being, one Consciousness, one even in infinite multiplicity."³

Thus action and creation cannot in the very nature of things be incompatible with the perfect and total realisation of the Supreme; a really dynamic living cannot go counter to the attainment of the supreme status of being; for "all that is in the kinesis, the movement, the action, the creation is Brahman."⁴

But still the detracting voice may not be altogether quieted. For there is a fundamental *pragmatic* misgiving that has first to be satisfactorily cleared before we can hope to establish the validity of our goal, the dynamic divinisation of our entire waking existence.

Granted that Brahman has two aspects equally real, equally true : an active one as well as a passive one. Granted that there is ample theoretical justification why the two aspects can be simultaneously embraced and realised. But still the question remains : Why is it that "*in experience* we find that... it is, normally, a quiescence that brings in the stable realisation of the eternal and the infinite : it is in silence or quietude that we feel most firmly the Some-

¹ Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother, pp. 152-155.

² The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 466.

^{3,4} The Life Divine, p. 413.

thing that is behind the world shown to us by our mind and senses.”¹

It is thus reasoned that, *in practice* if not in theory, all action, all creation, all determining perception must in their very nature limit and obscure the stable realisation, and hence these have to diminish and disappear if we would seek to enter the indivisible consciousness of the Real.

Here too, as we shall presently see, the reasoning is fallacious. For it is not dynamism as such that binds and involves the soul of the seeker; it is the intrinsic incapacity of our mind-consciousness that is at the root of the trouble.

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

SUPERMIND AND NATURE

WHEN we look at Nature, we are struck by three fundamental traits of her working—the inexhaustible abundance of her creation, her untiring enjoyment of the stupendous action of her creation and destruction, and the rigour of her iron laws.

But the laws of Nature are not as inexorable as we are apt to suppose. Science has proved that some of Nature's laws can be modified and even supplanted by other laws and rhythms of working evolved out of her. Her fixed habits can be, to a certain extent, unfixed, and new modalities can be introduced into her.

In another direction, we know that sometimes her normal functioning is overridden. The miracles recorded in history—the miracles performed by Christ and innumerable mystics and Yogis of the world—testify to the fact of the existence of an order or orders of Nature higher and more powerful than the one we know. The testimony of supraphysical or supernormal powers cannot be brushed aside. It will be nothing less than blind obscurantism—call it scientific obscurantism or scepticism, if you like—to deny the existence of such powers and potencies. When a power of a higher plane of existence is invoked and brought down, it effects a certain change in our natural order of life, and we call it a miracle, a mystery. In fact, there is nothing mysterious in it. It is an intervention of the force of another order of Nature.

We are, then, led to believe that there are various planes and orders of existence with their respective laws and rhythms of action; and, though they are all autonomous, there is a certain interaction among them, for all the constituents of the universe are interlinked, and there is no gap anywhere. Our physical Nature, too, is a part of the universal order and is in constant relation with it. If we bear this truth in mind, it will not be difficult for us to understand how human ingenuity or superhuman knowledge can make Nature relax the rigour of her laws.

The teeming abundance of Nature's creation is a marvel to contemplate. She produces and produces, and is never tired of it. Incalculable diversities are brought into existence, tried, tested, passed or rejected unremittingly. And through all this timeless labour, she is endeavouring to compass a greater and greater unity, a greater and ever more complex harmony, and a progressive approximation to the perfection of the Divine towards a complete union with whom she is slowly but surely advancing.

But she advances in her own way, and resents being disturbed, pushed about or hustled. She is too jealous of her freedom and autonomy to tolerate any encroachment on it. The psychological forces within her and the physical forces without her keep up a certain balance in her onward march of evolution.

This balance has often been menaced, and even the economy of her existence challenged and flouted by the ignorant intolerance of the human mind. Ascetic spirituality has always looked down upon Nature as an illusion and a snare, and there has been no end of conflict between the two. Rejection and repression on one side, and revolt and indignant explosion on the other, have marked the relation between them. And the conflict has proved fatal to both spirituality and Nature. Spirituality has forfeited the amplitude of its sweep and the limitless splendour of its rightful achievement on earth, and Nature has been severely left to its sluggish and obscure mechanism.

The descent of the Supermind has, however, ended this tragic drama of repulsion and conflict. A new era of harmony and collaboration has begun. Supermind respects the autonomy of every order of existence, and, because it is the supreme creative Consciousness-Force of the Divine, its authority is respected and obeyed by all orders and elements of the univers. It does not impose, it does not enforce its sovereignty, but it invites and readily receives the loyal co-operation of all.

The Mother said after an experience she had, "She (Nature) understood that the new consciousness that has taken birth does not intend to reject her, but wishes to embrace her totally. She understood that this new spirituality did not shirk life, did not recoil from the formidable amplitude of her movement, but, on the contrary,

wanted to integrate all her aspects. She understood that the supramental consciousness was there not to diminish but to complete her."¹

A new dawn has broken upon Nature. The new supramental spirituality has embraced her in all her manifold totality. She is promised an integral fulfilment of her seekings and strivings. She is promised the fullest manifestation of God in her and the endless rapture of her union with Him—the union, liberative, transformative and creative, the union which is the ultimate aim of her evolutionary endeavour. She has felt that, released from all constraints and washed clean of the timeless stigma of scornful rejection, she is now called to collaborate with God in the creation of a new world and the radiant, harmonious order of the Divine Life.

By this union of the supreme Creative Consciousness and Nature, and their collaboration, both spirituality and Nature will realise their wholeness of existence and wholeness of self-expression.

RISHABHCHAND

THE LIFE DIVINE

(BRIEF SUMMARY)

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE KNOWLEDGE AND THE IGNORANCE

THE seven principles of existence are, then, one in their reality, inseparable in their sevenfold action. They create the harmony of the universe and there is no essential reason why this should not be a complete harmony free from the element of discord, division and limitation.

The Vedic seers believed in such a creation and held its formation in man—called immortality—to be the object of man's Godward effort. But this is difficult for the human mind to accept, except in a beyond, because here the Inconscient seems to be all and the conscient soul an accident or an alien unable fully to realise itself. Here Ignorance seems to be the law.

It is true that here we act from the Inconscient and are governed by the Ignorance ; we must therefore examine this power of consciousness and determine its operation and origin,—not accepting the refusal of some philosophies to consider the question because it is insoluble ; and first we must fix what we mean by the Ignorance.

In the Veda the Ignorance is the non-perceiving of the essential unity which is beyond mind and of the essence and self-law of things in their original unity and actual universality ; it is a false knowledge based on division of the undivided, insistence on the fragmentary and little and rejection of the vast and complete view of things ; it is the undivine Maya.

The Vedantic distinction of Vidya and Avidya made the opposition more trenchant, Vidya being the knowledge of unity, Avidya the knowledge of multiplicity, but the knowledge of both was held to be necessary for the Truth and the Immortality ; the Ignorance was not a mere falsehood and seeing of unreality. The One really becomes the Many.

Later, the opposition was supposed to be rigid and irreconcilable, the world unreal, a superimposition of name and form on featureless Unity by Mind, the Ignorance an absolute nescience of the Truth.

This we reject, because such dialectical oppositions, flawed at their source, represent no actual reality of existence as a whole ; there is no irreconcilable opposition of dual principles, Ignorance creative, Knowledge destructive of world-existence, but an essential unity. As pain is an effect of the universal delight produced in the recipient by incapacity, as incapacity is a disposition of the universal Will-force, so ignorance is a particular action of the universal Knowledge.

Consciousness, which is Power, takes three poises; its plenitude of the divine knowledge, invariable in unity and multiplicity and beyond ; its dwelling upon apparent oppositions, the extreme being the superficial appearance of complete nescience in the Inconscient; and a mediary term or compromise between the two which is a superficial and partial emergence of self-conscious Knowledge, our own egoistic ignorance or false knowledge. The exact relations between these three have to be determined.

CHAPTER XXIX

MEMORY, SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE IGNORANCE

Memory is believed by some schools to be the constituent of our continuous personality ; but memory is only a mechanism, a device, a substitute for direct consciousness. The mind is directly conscious of existence in the present, holds existence in the past by its substitute memory, infers its future existence from this direct present self-consciousness and the memory of its continuity in the past.

This sense of self-conscious existence it extends into the idea of eternity, but the only eternity the mind really seizes is a continuous succession of moments of being in eternal Time ; of this eternity it possesses only the present moment, a limited portion of the past held fragmentarily and nothing at all of the future, while

it is unable to know any timeless eternity of conscious being, any real eternal Self. Therefore the nature of our Mind is an Ignorance seizing at knowledge by successive action in the moments of Time.

If mind is all, then we must remain forever in this Ignorance which is not absolute nescience, but an ineffectual and fragmentary seizing at knowledge. But there are really two powers of our conscious being, Ignorance of the mind, Knowledge beyond mind, simultaneously existing, either separately in an eternal dualism or, as is really the fact, as superior and inferior, sovereign and dependent states of the same consciousness, by which the Knower sees his timeless being and the action of Time in that self through the Knowledge while he sees himself in Time and travelling in the succession of its moments by the Ignorance. For this reason the Upanishad declares that Brahman can really be known by knowing him as both the Knowledge and the Ignorance and so only can one arrive at the status of immortality.

Ignorance is therefore the consciousness of being in the succession of Time, and it is so called because, actually self-divided by the moments of Time, the field of space and the forms of the multiplicity, it cannot know either eternal Being or the World, either the transcendent or the universal reality. Its knowledge is partly true, partly false, because it ignores the essence and sees only fugitive parts of the phenomenon.

It is through self-consciousness that the mind can arrive most readily at the eternal Reality ; the rest of its means of knowledge are, like memory, devices and substitutes for direct consciousness. It is easy therefore to regard the knowledge of the self within us as real and the rest as not self and illusion. But the distinction is illusory and self-absorption in the stable self within is only one state of consciousness like self-dispersion in thought and memory and will. The real self is the Eternal who is capable simultaneously of the mobility in Time and the immobility basing Time. All object of knowledge is that real and eternal self whether seen in essence and stability or in phenomenon and instability of Time.

The Ignorance is a means by which it is rendered into values of knowledge and action, Time being a sort of bank on which we draw for valuation and action in the present, with a realised store

in the account of the past and an unrealised infinite deposit to be taken from the future so as to be made valuable for Time-experience and valid for Time-activity. But, behind, all is known and ready for use according to the will of the Self in its dealing with Time and space and Causality.

SRI AUROBINDO

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REVIEWS

INDIAN LANGUAGE HIGHWAY FOR ALL by *Adetha P Siitaa Devii*. Pub. Adyar Library Research Centre, Madras 20. Price Rs. 35/-

INDIA is a vast panorama of civilisations and cultures. Just as the various mountains and rivers contribute to the scenic beauty, the different schools of music and dancing, the various types of architecture and painting and myriad languages form the base of her rich cultural heritage. Man is an expert in misusing even the most useful and precious gifts. All the languages that existed as different facets of one and the same Indian vehicle of expression are being used to disrupt the whole nation and balkanise it. Each language has its own beauties, each has something to contribute. But in the hands of interested people they have become weapons of unending quarrels. In the present phase of the history of India it is necessary to emphasise the unity of India and show it to ourselves that in spite of all possible diversities we are one. Instead of thinking in terms of 'My Punjab', 'My Bengal', let us say 'Our Punjab' and 'Our Bengal'. Let us drink deep at the fountain of wisdom in all the languages of India—nay, even of the whole world. If we get acquainted with more and more languages it may help us in getting a wider perspective. With this background, we welcome the *Indian Language Highway for All* which has been dedicated to India, the 'Mother of the world' and to the closer 'interlinking' of all her sons and daughters.'

The book gives some idea of all the important languages of India, Burma and Ceylon. Hundreds of words and sentences used in common everyday life have been given in English, French and fifteen other languages. All the languages are transliterated in Roman characters. A very good attempt has been made to overcome the deficiencies of the Roman script by using special 'tools of transliteration' that have been fully explained in the beginning. It is a pity that the author has not included Sanskrit, the mother of most of our modern languages.

A section is specially devoted to learning Hindi and Tamil. A study of this section would show that even these two languages are closer to each other than imagined.

We commend this book to all those who are interested in the study of the various languages. We look forward for more publications in the line by the author.

RAVINDRA

SANSKRIT-FRENCH .

AJITAGAMA VOL. II ED. N. R. Bhatt. Pub. Institut Français D'Indologie, Pondicherry. Pp. 212

The first volume of this work, reviewed in these columns some time ago, dealt with Siva as the Unmanifest, represented by the Symbol *Śivaliṅga*. The second volume deals with the various manifest forms of Siva, the icons, in the temples of Siva and the attendant, *parivāra*, deities, their characteristic installation, connected rituals etc. There are differences in the enumeration of deities from Agama to Agama, a feature to which the editor draws pointed attention. In this Agama the iconic forms are divided into two broad categories, variations of Maheshwara and those of Rudra. The icons belonging to the class of Maheshwara are : 1. Born out of *liṅga*, 2. sitting at ease, 3. with Gauri, 4. as a mendicant beggar 5. bearing human skulls, 6. dance pose, 7. the triple Murtis, 8. gracious to Vishnu having the desires, 9. bearing the moon on the crest and 10. half-form is of the Goddess.

The icons relating to the class of Rudra are : 1. Dakshinamurti, 2. destroyer of Kama, 3. destroyer of Yama, 4. marriage pose, 5. with Uma and Skanda, 6. destroyer of Jalandhara, 7. half form is of Vishnu, 8. mounted on the bull, 9. the enemy of the three cities and 10. remover of the Poison.

It would have been highly educative if plates depicting these various Murtis were appended to the book.

Then there are chapters describing the characteristics of the various forms of Temple Halls (*maṇḍapa*), Courtyards (*prākāra*) and the Towers (*gopura*). There are descriptions of the installation

and allied ceremonies. When an image has to be installed, precious gems are placed under the *Piṭha* as foundation. Interesting is the eye-opening (*netronmīlana*) of the idol done with a golden needle by an expert sculptor.

A very informative work.

M. P. PANDIT

*"Fear is slavery, work is liberty,
courage is victory."*

—THE MOTHER

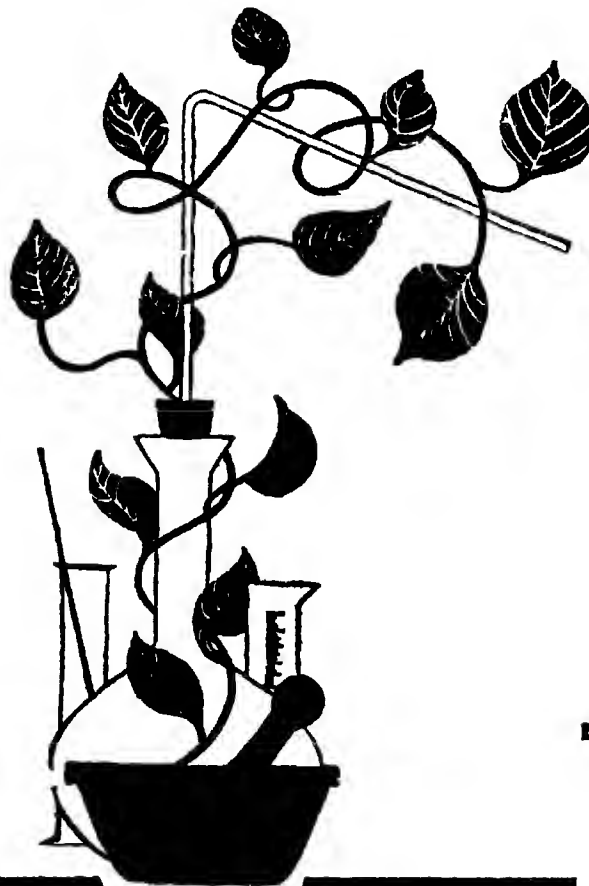


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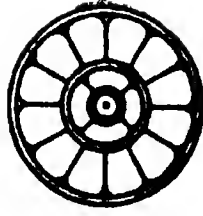


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... one world that you
have to change and that the change
is possible. If you run away from
this world, you will have to come again probably
in worse conditions and you will have
to do everything all over again.

It is much better not to be a coward,
to face now the situation and to do the
necessary effort to conquer. The help is
always with you; you must learn
to avail yourself of it.

Love and Reasoning, /

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In spiritual matters mental logic easily blunders; intuition, faith and a plastic spiritual reason are here the only guides.

SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIALS:

TO READ SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

WHY do we read the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother?
And if we read them, how to read them?

Do we read for the sake of study? to know things? to acquire knowledge? That is a secondary aspect, a profit gained by the way. The real purpose of coming in contact with the words of Mother and Sri Aurobindo is to become conscious, to acquire consciousness, to be more and more conscious, increase more and more the consciousness. To understand, that is to say, to seize by the mind, to grasp intellectually the writings of Mother and Sri Aurobindo is rather difficult. The easier, the more right way would be to enter into the atmosphere of the world that they have created with their words, to feel the vibration that the words emanate. For the words that they have uttered are not mere words taken or found in the dictionaries, they are not mere sounds, dead syllables, they are living entities, symbols of consciousness, the consciousness of which I have just spoken. These symbols, being symbols of consciousness are luminous, they shed light all along, they are full of power and ex-

tend power all along, they have life and they are full of delight. It is this inner world that is behind the outer world of words that one has to be in touch with, be aware of, in the first instance, before one can have a mental understanding; in other words, you must cultivate the right attitude, a turn of your consciousness in tune with the consciousness that has worked out the words of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. You have to take a plunge, as it were, dip into the waters, and be soaked in the caress of that element, to come in the living touch of the substance of words, go behind the meaning, if necessary, avoiding it even. You must contact the living sap, the *rasa*, that has poured itself out in the creation. If you have tasted of that, then—it has its own light—that will suffuse you automatically with its radiance; the delight of bathing in the living spring will formulate itself in rhythms of knowledge and true understanding.

At least such should be the basis of approach to the works of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. You may have possessed a rich intellectual apparatus, you may have all the information that sciences and philosophies have gathered, you may have perused the whole story of the evolution of human knowledge up to the present time, all these are lesser lights, they do not illuminate the light before which you stand. That light is shown and recognised by its own reflection or emanation in you, the little light that is in you, your soul.

Indeed, there have been instances where great intellectuals, famed savants found themselves bewildered before the simplest magic phrases of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo. On the other hand, simpler minds with no burden of learning, nor pride of pedantry, with their pure streak of light in the depth of their consciousness were able to seize and unveil the secret sense.

Your mental understanding, your intellectual apprehension may or will add to the joy of your discovery; one that is perhaps at the end or subsequently, when your brain, your physical reason has been washed by the flow of the inner light, when it has been made pure and plastic and docile.

In another way, to understand the Truth—the Truth that the words of the Mother or Sri Aurobindo express—you must start by living it, approaching it not merely through your mind, in fact not even through your heart, but possessing it in the very body. The

Mother says, real understanding comes by the body-understanding. Indeed, the true aim of knowledge is not merely to know but to be.

A TRUE PROFESSOR

The Mother says a professor, a true professor, must be truly a yogi. That is to say, a teacher, even a school-teacher, one imparting what is called secular education, has to be nothing less than a yogi. The Indian term for teacher is 'guru' and 'guru' meant a teacher both spiritual and secular. This distinction of the two words is made by the modern spirit, it did not belong to the ancient culture. The secular knowledge was also considered a necessary part of the spiritual knowledge, that which prepared for it and led towards it. The 'apara vidya' or the 'vedangas' were but limbs of the supreme knowledge 'para vidya' and 'veda'.

A teacher has to be a yogi does not mean that he is to be a paragon of moral qualities, following, for example, the ten commandments scrupulously. Not to tell a lie, not to lose temper, to be patient, impartial, to be honest and unselfish, all these more or less social qualities have their values but something else is needed for the true teacher, something of another category and quality. I said social qualities, I might say also mental qualities. The consciousness of the teacher has to be other than mental, something deeper, more abiding, more constant, less relative, something absolute. Do we then prescribe the supreme Brahma-consciousness for the teacher? Not quite. We mean the consciousness of a soul, the living light that is within every aspiring human being. It is a glad luminousness in the heart that can exist with or without the brilliant riches of a cultivated brain. And one need not go so far as the vedantic Sachchidananda consciousness.

That is the first and primary necessity. When the teacher approaches the pupil, he must know how to do it in and through that inner intimate consciousness. It means a fundamental attitude, a mode of being of the whole nature rather than a scientific procedure: all the manuals of education will not be able to procure you this treasure. It is an acquisition that develops or manifests spontaneously through an earnest desire, that is to say, aspiration

for it. It is this that establishes a strange contact with the pupil. radiates or infuses the knowledge, even the learning that the teacher possesses, infallibly and naturally into the mind and brain of the pupil.

Books and programmes are of secondary importance, they are only a scaffolding, the building within is made of a different kind of bricks. A happy luminous consciousness within is the teacher's asset, with that he achieves all, without it he fails always.

If the teacher is to be a yogi, the pupil on his side must be at least an aspirant. But I suppose a pupil, so long as he is a child, is a born aspirant. For, as the Mother says, a child's consciousness retains generally something of the pure inner consciousness for sometime at least until it is overshadowed by the development of the body and the mind in the ordinary normal way. Something of this, we know, has been expressed in the famous lines of the visionary English poet:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar...
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison house begin to close
Upon the growing boy.

But if the right teacher is found, that pure flame in the child's consciousness can be kept burning, can even be made to burn brighter and higher. A teacher too on his side in the presence of a pure child-flame in his pupil may profit by its warm touch; for the two by their intimate interaction grow together towards a greater fulfilment in both.

When we speak or think of education and consider the relation of the teacher and the pupil, we generally confine ourselves to the mental domain, that is to say, aim wholly or mainly at the intellectual acquisition and attainment, and only sometimes as per necessity as it were we turn at most to the moral domain, that is to say, we look

for the growth of character, of good manners and behaviour—social values as we have said. Here we have tried to bring into the educationist's view a more important, a much more important and interesting domain—a new dimension of consciousness.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

FROM THE (*KARMAYOGIN*) (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM:

THE FUTURE

PAST AND THE FUTURE

OUR contemporary, the *Statesman*, notices in an unusually self-restrained article the recent brochure republished by Doctor A. K. Coomaraswamy from the *Modern Review* under the title, "The Message of the East". We had not the work before us but, from our memory of the articles and our knowledge of our distinguished countryman's views, we do not think the *Statesman* has quite caught the spirit of the writer. Doctor Coomaraswamy is above all a lover of art and beauty and the ancient thought and greatness of India, but he is also, and as a result of this deep love and appreciation, and ardent Nationalist. Writing as an artist, he calls attention to the debased aesthetic ideas and tastes which the ugly and sordid commercialism of the West has introduced into the mind of a nation once distinguished for its superior beauty and grandure of conception and for the extent to which it suffused the whole of life with the forces of the intellect and the spirit. He laments the persistence of a servile imitation of English ideas, English methods, English machinery and production even in the new Nationalism. And he reminds his readers that nations cannot be made by politics and economics alone, but that art also has a great and a still unrecognised claim. The main drift of his writing is to ensure the low imitative un-Indian and bourgeois ideals of our national activity in the nineteenth century and to recall our minds to the cardinal fact that, if India is to rise and be great as a nation, it is not by imitating the methods and institutions of English politics and commerce, but carrying her own civilisation, purified of weaknesses that have overtaken it, to a much higher and mightier fulfilment than any that it has reached in the past. Our nation is to outdistance, lead and instruct Europe, not merely to imitate and learn from her. Doctor Coomaraswamy speaks of art, but it is certain that a man of

his wide culture would not exclude, and we know he does not exclude, thought, literature, and religion from the forces that must uplift our nation and are necessary to its future. To recover Indian thought, Indian character, Indian perceptions, Indian energy, Indian greatness, and to solve the problems that perplexed the world in an Indian spirit and from the Indian standpoint, this, in our view, with a mission of Nationalism. We agree with Doctor Coomaraswamy that an exclusive preoccupation with politics and economics is likely to dwarf our growth and prevent the flowering of originality and energy. We have to return to the fountainheads of our ancient religion, philosophy, art and literature and pour the revivifying influences of our immemorial Aryan spirit and ideals into our political and economic development. This is the ideal the *Karmayogin* holds before it, and our outlook and Doctor Coomaraswamy's do not substantially differ. But in judging our present activities we cannot look, as he does, from a purely artistic and idealistic standpoint, but must act and write in the spirit of a practical idealism.

The debasement of our mind, character and tastes by a grossly commercial, materialistic and insufficient European education is a fact upon which the young Nationalism has always insisted. The practical destruction of our artistic perceptions and the plastic skill and fineness of eye and hand which once gave our productions pre-eminence distinction and mastery of the European markets, is also a thing accomplished. Most vital of all the spiritual and intellectual divorce from the past which the present schools and universities have effected, has beggared the nation of the originality, high aspiration and forceful energy which can alone make a nation free and great. To reverse the process and recover what we have lost, is undoubtedly the first object to which we ought to devote ourselves. And as the loss of originality, aspiration and energy was the most vital of all these losses, so their recovery should be our first and most important objective. The primary aim of the prophets of Nationalism was to rid the nation of the idea that the future was limited by the circumstances of the present, that because temporary causes had brought us low and made us weak, low therefore must be our aims and weak our methods. They

pointed the mind of the people to a great and splendid destiny, not in some distant millennium but in the comparatively near future, and fired the hearts of the young men with a burning desire to realise the apocalyptic vision. As a justification of what might otherwise have seemed a dream and as an inexhaustible source of energy and inspiration, they pointed persistently to the great achievements and grandiose civilisation of our forefathers and called on the rising generation to recover their lost spiritual and intellectual heritage. It cannot be denied that this double effort to realise the past and the future has been the distinguishing temperament and the chief uplifting force in the movement, and it cannot be denied that it is bringing back to our young men originality, aspiration and energy. By this force the character, temper and action of the Bengali has been altered beyond recognition in a few years. To raise the mind, character and tastes of the people, to recover the ancient nobility of temper, the strong Aryan character and the high Aryan outlook, the perceptions which made earthly life beautiful and wonderful, and the magnificent spiritual experiences, realisations and aspirations which made us the deepest-hearted, deepest-thoughted and most delicately profound in life of all the peoples of the earth, is the task next in importance and urgency. We had hoped by means of National Education to affect this great object as well as to restore to our youth the intellectual heritage of the nation and build up on that basis a yet greater culture in the future. We must admit that the instrument which we cherished and for which such sacrifices were made, has proved insufficient and threatens, in unfit hands, to lose its promise of fulfilment and be diverted to lower ends. But the movement is greater than its instruments. We must strive to prevent the destruction of that which we have created and in the meanwhile, build up a centre of culture, freer and more perfect, which will either permeate the other with itself or to replace it if destroyed. Finally, the artistic awakening has been commenced by that young, living and energetic school which has gathered round the Master and originator, S. J. Abanindranath Tagore. The impulse which this school is giving, its inspired artistic recovery of the past, its intuitive anticipations of the future, have to be popularised and made a national possession.

Doctor Coomaraswamy complains of the survivals of the past in the preparations for the future but no movement, however vigorous, can throw off in a few years the effects of a whole century. We must remember also why the degradation and denationalisation, "the mighty evil in our souls," of which the writer complains, came into being. A painful but necessary work had to be done, and because the English nation were the fittest instrument for his purpose, God led them all over those thousands of miles of alien Ocean, gave a strength to their hearts and subtlety to their brains, and set them up in India to do His work, which they have been doing faithfully if blindly, ever since and are doing at the present moment. The spirit and ideals of India had come to be confined in a mould which, however beautiful, was too narrow and slender to bear the mighty burden of our future. When that happens, the mould has to be broken and even the ideal lost for a while, in order to be recovered free of constraint and limitation. We have to recover the Aryan spirit and ideal and keep it intact but enshrined in new forms and more expansive institutions. We have to treasure jealously everything in our social structure, manners, institutions, which is of permanent value, essential to our spirit or helpful to the future; but we must not cabin the expanding and aggressive spirit of India in temporary forms which are the creation of the last few hundred Years. That would be a vain and disastrous endeavour. The mould is broken; we must remould in larger outlines and with a richer content. For the work of destruction England was best fitted by her stubborn individuality and by that very commercialism and materialism which made her the anti-type in temper and culture of the race she governed. She was chosen too for the unrivalled efficiency and skill with which she has organised an individualistic and materialistic democracy. We had to come to close quarters with that democratic organisation, draw it into ourselves and absorb the democratic spirit and methods so that we might rise beyond them. Our half-aristocratic, half-theocratic feudalism had to be broken, in order that the democratic spirit of the Vedanta might be released and, by absorbing all that is needed of the aristocratic and theocratic culture, create for the Indian race a new and powerful political and social organisation. We have to learn and use the democratic prin-

ciple and methods of Europe in order that hereafter we may build up something more suited to our past and to the future of humanity. We have to throw away the individualism and materialism and keep the democracy. We have to solve for the human race the problem of harmonising and spiritualising its impluses towards liberty, equality and fraternity. In order that we may fulfil our mission we must be masters in our own home. It is out of no hostility to the English people, no race hatred that we seek absolute autonomy, but because it is the first condition of our developing our national self and realising our destiny. It is for this reason that the engrossing political preoccupation came upon us; and we cannot give up or tone down our political movement until the lesson of democratic self-government is learned and the first condition of national self-fulfilment realised. For another reason also England was chosen, because she had organised the competitive system of commerce, with its bitter and murderous struggle for existence, in the most skilful, discrete and successful fashion. We had to feel the full weight of that system and learn the literal meaning of this industrial realisation of Darwinism. It has been written large for us in ghastly letters of famine, chronic starvation and misery and a decreasing population. We have risen at last, entered into the battle and with the Boycott for a weapon, are striking at the throat of the British commerce, even as it struck at others, first by protection and then by free trade. Again it is not out of hatred that we strive, but out of self-preservation. We must conquer in that battle if we are to live. We cannot arrest our development of industry and commerce while waiting for a new commercial system to develop or for beauty and art to reconquer the world. As in politics so in commerce, we must learn and master the European methods in order that we may eventually rise above them. The crude commercial Swadeshi, which Doctor Coomerswamy finds so distasteful and disappointing, is as integral a part of the national awakening as the movement towards Swaraj or as the new School of Art. If this crude Swadeshi were to collapse and the national movement towards autonomy come to nothing, the democratic renaissance he has praised so highly, would wither and sink with the drying up of the soil in which it was planted. A nation need not be luxuriously wealthy in order to be profoundly

artistic, but it must have a certain amount of well-being, a national culture and, above all, hope and ardour, if it is to maintain a national art based on a wide-spread development of artistic perception and faculty. Moreover, aesthetic arts and crafts cannot live against the onrush of cheap and vulgar manufactures under the conditions of the modern social structure. Industry can only become again beautiful if poverty and the struggle for life are eliminated from society and the co-operative State and commune organised as the fruit of a great moral and spiritual uplifting of humanity. We hold such an uplifting and reorganisation as part of India's mission but to do her work we must live. Therefore the commercial pre-occupation has been added to the political. We perceive the salvation of the country not in parting with either of these, but in adding to them a religious and moral preoccupation. On the basis of that religious and moral awakening the preoccupation of art and fine culture will be added and firmly based. There are many who perceive the necessity of the religious and moral regeneration, who are inclined to turn from the prosaic details of politics and commerce and regret that any guide and teacher of the nation should stoop to mingle them. That is a grievous error. The men who would lead India must be catholic and many sided. When the Avatar comes, we like to believe that he will be not only the religious guide, but the political leader, the great educationist, the regenerator of society, the captain of co-operative industry, with the soul of the poet, scholar and artist. He will be in short the summary and grand type of the future Indian nation which is rising to reshape and lead the world.

MAHAMEDAN REPRESENTATION

The question of separate representation for the Mahamedan community is one of those momentous issues raised in haste by a statesman unable to appreciate the forces with which he is dealing, which bear fruit no man expected and least of all the ill-advised Frankenstein who was the first responsible for its creation. The common belief among Hindus is that the Government have decided to depress the Hindu element in the Indian people by raising the Mahamedan element, and ensure a perpetual preponderance in their

own favour by leaning on a Mahamedan vote purchased by a system of preference. The denials of high class officials, who declared that it is only out of careful consideration for the rights and interests of minorities that they have made a special Mahommedan representation an essential feature of the Reform Scheme, have not convinced a single Hindu mind; for the obvious retort is that it is only one minority which is specially cared for and this special care is extended to it even in provinces where it is in a large majority. No provision at all has been made for the safe-guarding of Hindu minorities for the Parsis, the Sikhs, the Christians and other sections which may reasonably declare that they too are Indians and citizens of the Empire no less than the Mahamedans. The workings of this belief in the mind of the premier community in India cannot at present be gauged. It is not till the details of the Reform Scheme are published, elections over, the councils working and the preponderance of the pro-government vote visible, that those workings can assume a definite shape. At present irritation, heart-burning, a solemn gloom and a growing resolve to assert and organise a separate existence and work for their own hand are the first results of the separatist policy. How far Sir Feroz Shah and his valiant band will be able to fight this growing discontent, remains to be seen. It is quite possible that the pro-Mahamedanism of the Reform Scheme may lead to a Hindu upheaval all over India, as fervent and momentous as the convulsion in Bengal, Madras and Maharastra which followed Lord Curzon's Partition blunder. How far it will advantage the Mahamedans to be in active opposition to an irritated and revolted Hindu community throughout the country they live in, is a question for Mahamedans to consider. A certain section with Syed Hyder Reza at their head have considered it and are against the separate representation altogether. Another section represented by Mr. Ali Imam are for a compromise between the full Moslem demand for separate electorate and the Hindu demand for equal treatment of all communities. Unfortunately, this compromise is merely the Government scheme which Hindu sentiment has almost unanimously condemned as unfair and partial. The only section of Hindus in its favour is the dwindling minority which follows the great twin bretheren of Bombay and the support given by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Feroz Shah to the

separate representation idea is likely to cost them their influence with the moderate Hindu community everywhere outside the narrow radius of their personal influence. A third section rejoicing in the leadership of Mr. Amir Ali, are the irreconcilables of militant Islam aspiring to hold India under the British aegis as heirs of the Mogul and keepers of the gateway of India. The Reform Scheme is the second act of insanity which has germinated from the unsound policy of the bureaucracy. It will cast all India into the melting pot and complete the work of the Partition. Our own attitude is clear. We will have no part or lot in Reforms which deal no popular majority, no substantive control, no opportunity for Indian capacity and statesmanship, no seed of democratic expansion. We will not for a moment accept separate electorates or separate representation, not because we are opposed to a large Mahamedan influence in popular assemblies when they come but, because we will be no party to a distinction which recognises Hindu and Mahmedan as permanently separate political units and thus precludes the growth of single and indivisible Indian nation. We oppose any such attempt at division whether it comes from an embarrassed Government seeking for political support or from an embittered Hindu community allowing the passions of the moment to obscure their vision of the future.

“SWARAJ” AND THE MUSULMANS

We extract in our columns this week the comments of S^j Bepin chandra Pal's organ, “Swaraj”, on the Government's Pro-Mahamedan policy and its possible effects in the future. We are glad to see this great Nationalist again expressing his views with his usual originality and fine political insight. We do not ourselves understand the utility of such a campaign as S^j. Bepinchandra is carrying on in England. In politics quite as much as in ordinary conduct the rule of *deś-kāl-pātra*, the right place, the right time and the right person, conditions the value and the collectiveness of the work. For Bepin Babu's mission there could not be a worse place than England, a worse time than the present and a worse audience than the British people. What is the prophet of self-help and dissociation doing in England! Or what kind of message is this that he carries

to the British public, "We do not welcome your favours, we reject your help and sympathy and will have no political association with you until Swaraj is ours,—and therefore I am here speaking to you and publishing my views to a British audience in London!" We can only suppose that Bepin Babu does really imagine he can produce some kind of effect worth having, moral if not substantial, upon the ruling nation, and if so what does it portend? Is Saul also among the prophets? Does Bepin too stand in the doorway of Britania?

The first three or four issues of *Swaraj* disappointed our expectations. A sense of the unreality of his position seemed to haunt the writer and robbed his writing of the former strength and close touch with the subject. It was the old views, the familiar thought, the well known manner, but it neither convinced, illuminated nor inspired. This month's *Swaraj* is more confident and effective although the thing still seems to be in the air. The passage extracted and the admirable character sketch of Sj. Shyamsundar Chakravarty are the best things in the issue. Bepin Babu seems to have recovered the copious vein of thought, the subtle and flexible reasoning, the just and original view of his subject which made one wait with impatience for every fresh number of *New India*. His attitude towards the Reform scheme and the Mahamedan demand for a separate electorate is the attitude which has consistantly been adopted by the Nationalist party in Begnal towards the Hindu-Mahamedan question in ordinary politics. We do not fear Mahamedan opposition; as long as it is the honest Swadeshi article and not manufactured in Shillong or Simla, we welcome it as a sign of life and aspiration. We do not shun, we desire the awakening of Islam in India even if its first crude efforts are misdirected against ourselves; for all strength, all energy, all action is grist to the mill of the nation builder. In that faith we are ready, when the time comes for us to meet in the political field to exchange with the Musulman, just as he chooses, the firm clasp of the brother or the resolute grip of the wrestler.

That time has not yet come. There is absolutely no reason why the electoral question should create bad blood between the two communities, for if we live aside the limited number who still hunger after loaves and fishes or nurse dead delusions, the reform has no liv-

ing interest for the Hindu. His field of energy lies elsewhere than in the enlarged pretences of British Liberalism. His business is to find out his own strength and prepare it for a great future, and the less he meddles with unreal politics and nerveless activities, the better for the nation. The Mahamedan has not progressed so far. He has to taste the sweets of political privilege and find them turn to ashes in its mouth. He has to formulate demands rejoice at promises, fume at betrayals, until he thoroughly discovers the falsity and impossibility of his hopes. His progress is likely to be much swifter than ours has been in the past, for he gets the advantage if not of our experience, at least of the ideas now in the air and of the more bracing and stimulating atmosphere. He is more likely to demand than to crave, and his disillusionment must necessarily be the speedier. It is then that and he too will seek the strength in himself and touch the true springs of self-development. Our best policy is to leave the Mahamedan representatives on the council to work out their destiny face to face with the bureaucracy, with no weightier Hindu counterpoise than the effete politicians, the time servers and the self-seekers.

Of one thing we may be certain, that Hindu-Mahamedan unity cannot be effected by political adjustment or Congress flatteries. It must be sought deeper down, in the heart and in the mind for where the causes of disunion are, there the remedies must be sought. We shall do well in trying to solve the problem to remember that misunderstanding is the most fruitful cause of our differences, that love compels love and that strength conciliates the strong. We must strive to remove the causes of misunderstanding by a better mutual knowledge and sympathy; we must extend the unfaltering love of the patriot to our Musulman brother remembering always that in him too *Nārāyan* dwells and to him too our Mother has given a permanent place in her bosom; but we must cease to approach him falsely or flatter out of a selfish weakness and cowardice. We believe this to be the only practical way of dealing with the difficulty. As a political question the Hindu-Mahamedan problem does not interest us at all, as a national problem it is of supreme importance, We shall make it a main part of our work to place Mahamed and Islam in a new light before our readers, to spread juster views of Maha-

medan history and civilisation, to appreciate the Musulman's place in our national development and the means of harmonising his communal life with our own, not ignoring the difficulties that stand in our way for making the most of the possibilities of brotherhood and mutual understanding. Intellectual sympathy can only draw together, the sympathy of the heart can alone unite. But the one is a good preparation for the other.

SRI AUROBINDO

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

XIV

Oh! the boat plies between Ganga and Yamuna.
The Sea-elephant lies there plunged,
 he ferries easily the yogi across.
Oh my mate, ply on, oh, ply on, my love,
 it is late on the way.
Through the Grace of the Guru's feet
 I will reach again the city of Victory.
Five oars are rowing, the ropes are tied
 to the peg in the rear.
Emptiness is the pan, bale the water with it,
 pour out so that no chink permits a drop.
The sun and the moon are the twin propellers.

Neither to the right nor to the left look for the way—
 Row on at ease.
She takes nor dole nor obole, she ferries you
 of her own will.
One who rides a chariot and knows not how to ply a boat
 wanders from shore to shore.

Notes:-

Ganga and Yamuna: the upward and the downward currents of consciousness and force. The ascending current leads the being to the higher and higher levels, while the descending current brings the riches from above into the lower regions. The companion who is with you and helps you through the journey is your inner diety represented here as the sea-elephant.

This is a familiar image in the orthodox Tantra. It also represents the Purusha-Prakriti play. Tantra speaks of the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna where one is to seize by violence the divine damsel.

Sri Aurobindo refers to the same dual phenomenon as “aspiration from below” and “Grace from above”.

Emptiness or Neutral: the original word “pulinda” is taken by the Sanskrit commentator as representing the neuter. Evidently it means the Void in which all creation ceases, the sun and the moon being the motors of creation.

XV

You seek to weigh the true reality
 of your self-experience:
 But what is beyond ken leaves no trace for recognition.
 Whoever went the straight upward way
 came to the end of all ways.
 O fool, move not from shore to shore,
 there is a straight road in the world.
 May no curve turn you aside, O child,
 the King's way is spread with velvet.
 Lo, the ocean of illusions and delusions
 and you know neither its end nor its bottom:

No boat nor raft is in sight—
 what an error not to ask it of the Guru!
 A bare expanse, no frontier anywhere!
 Oh! make no error in your going.
 Here are the eight great accomplishments
 for one who goes the straight way.
 Leave all other ways, right or left—
 says Shantipada in brief—
 Close your eyes and go the way that has
 no steps, nor shrubs nor herbs!¹

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

THE SUPRAMENTAL TRUTH

REALITY and Truth in their full nature are absolute, infinite, limitless and all-inclusive. And they consist of many planes or levels of existence. Matter, Life and Mind are the levels familiar to us. Each one of them is infinite in its extent and field and yet qualitatively different and quite limited and determined in its characteristics. Matter in apparent form is characterised by the property of occupying space, life by the law of birth, growth, decay and death and mind by an awareness, a consciousness and thought. These planes and levels of existence are familiar and are persistent subjects of study for science as well as philosophy.

The awareness of mind is essentially an awareness of a plurality of discrete objects. The idea of the whole or of the unity of things is for it a construction, a hypothesis, an imagined or conceived possibility, not a concrete fact of experience as plurality is. But it has an urge to know things as a whole and explain each phenomenon. In that attempt it creates philosophies.

A philosophy is always a kind of larger unity which seeks to explain the phenomenon of the planes of matter, life and mind. Now the problem always faced in these attempts is a reconciliation between the plurality and discreteness of facts of the realms of matter, life, and mind and the unity and oneness of the Absolute and the Infinite of Philosophy which seeks to explain these.

In one approach of philosophy, plurality and unity constitutes a sharp antithesis. Unity is unity, just oneness and there can be no room for plurality in it. And since the absolute is the true ultimate Reality, therefore this plurality of the world must be unreal. The two together cannot be real.

There is also the other approach to which unity means a unity in plurality. It appears that a concrete unity always includes multiplicity of details. The Absolute here will not negate the world, but include it. However, the precise relation of the world and the Absolute is yet a problem, since a proper reconciliation between the absolute unity of the absolute and the fragmented discreteness

of the world, its oppositions, its individualisms and egoisms is not easy. The two lie very far apart.

In religion, the problems of the relation between God and the world are the parallel phenomenon. This imperfect world and that perfect God are a sharp antithesis and a reconciliation is as difficult. Why such a world was created? How can it be the work of an all-good, all-knowing and all-powerful God? etc., etc.

The result of it all has been either a realism, which takes this world, as it is, as the whole or primary existence or an idealism, which looks upon the world as a disagreeable necessity and cherishes the Absolute and God as the real truth.

Now the supramental truth is a plane of existence, which in philosophical conception and as fact of Yogic experience is characterised by a simultaneity of plurality and unity. It is a unity out of which plurality begins to emerge. The unity of the absolute and plurality of the mind are conceptions and facts far removed from each other. A reconciliation between them becomes difficult. But with the supramental truth duly interposed, the antithesis tends to take the shape of a graded continuity. The world then will hardly appear as a denial of the Absolute, but a particular manifestation of it. Between the supramental plane and the plane of mind there are other planes, characterised by Sri Aurobindo, which further substantiate the continuity of existence through its various levels. The unity, which is absolute and inherent at the highest level of the ultimate reality, becomes a unity with plurality issuing forth, like the rays radiating out of the sun in supermind. At lower planes one after the other the plurality gets more and more marked and developed until in mind it becomes the exclusive governing principle. The process of increasing emphasis on plurality reaches its extreme consequence in the atomic fragmentation of material existence.

In the reverse movement in this ladder of existence we rise to increasing unity. Life has more unity than matter as its inner organisation shown in the process of growth is a superior factor. In mind, knowing, feeling and willing are interpenetrating, the whole of a state of consciousness lives in each part and each part of it lives in the whole. But the world it organises is one of discrete facts, which it seeks to unify through generalisation and hypotheses. Above the

mind at the plane called by Sri Aurobindo Higher Mind, unity becomes a direct perception, but this unity is the unity of larger wholes. At further planes the unity goes on becoming wider and larger and a more vivid fact. At supermind it becomes integral in the midst of multiplicity. In the Absolute above the supermind the unity becomes the essential fact with multiplicity as inherent and implicit possibilities.

Here is now a picture of the full ladder of existence in which one could seek to see the relation of each part to the whole. The supramental truth is evidently the most important link between the absolute unity above and the fragmented plurality below. And it brings the two into relationship and thus makes this world meaningful and understandable.

The world now becomes a fully intended fact for the Absolute and for God, but a fact at a particular level operating under particular conditions with possibilities of growth to higher planes of existence. These possibilities or the prospects of growth lend new meanings to its present limitations. The limitations then become the opportunities of growth. And thus the whole world takes on the form of a great adventure of the realisation and manifestation of the plenary Divine consciousness, and being intended by that consciousness and possessed and moved by the same must evidently be capable of expressing the same. The disjointed plurality thus becomes a challenge to seek and realise the missing unity. The world thus can by no means be a disagreeable fact, on the other hand a most attractive pursuit, the pursuit of the one in the many, of homogeneity in heterogeneity. Ordinarily we conceive of the Absolute as absolute being. That by our very conception excludes the power and function which creates and determines finite forms. Thus naturally the relation between the absolute being and the world of finite objects becomes difficult. It appears, in our search for an explanation of the world of finite objects in their totality, by contrast, as it were, we turn to absolute existence. Spiritual experience too set the mental plurality and spiritual oneness in a sharp contrast. The experiences of the levels of consciousness above the mind have not been carefully identified and properly organised. And the urge to discover the continuity and the gradations of unity and diversification has not been strong enough.

The result has been the irreconcilable sort of opposition between appearance and ultimate reality, between the many and the one. The history of philosophy in India and in Europe presents many striking cases of the difficulty. Even the best monistic philosophies are marked and marred by this dualism. Shankar in India described the relation between Brahman and the World by a straight and an honest word "Anirvachaniya", 'inexplicable'. Hegel and Bradley, in the West, have awful difficulty in explaining appearances in terms of the reality of the absolute consciousness.

But in recent times Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin, proceeding on the facts of evolution and pressing evolution into the future, are able to arrive at interesting conclusions. They find that man must be followed up in his growth, by a consciousness unified and integrated. This higher quality of consciousness which they anticipate as a logical sequence to the present consciousness of man, provides a valuable basis of new facts as a relation between the discreteness of mental perception and the unity of the absolute consciousness.

However, much more is needed to demonstrate the full continuity of life and existence. We need to seek and discover the ascending levels of consciousness in ourselves and see their varied relationships with the world. Each level, we will find, has a world of its own. The three levels familiar to us those of the body, life and mind, have their respective corresponding worlds easily differentiable. The body needs and responds to a material existence, the life-impulses in us primarily to a world of corresponding impulses and emotions. And the mind in us finds its best satisfaction in the realm of thought. Now to follow up mind to its higher planes and those beyond them, of increasing unity and oneness, is exactly the challenge to man. A higher race than man with a consciousness higher than mental is already conceived as a possibility. Julian Huxley conceives individual growth as the line of evolutionary progress for the future. And Bergson and Teilhard de Chardin think of a higher race of men.

Compare the following from Julian Huxley, Teilhard de Chardin and Bergson:—

Huxley in his 'Introduction' to Teilhard's 'The Phenomenon of Man':

“With his genius for fruitful analogy, he (Teilhard) points out that the process of evolution on earth is itself now in the process of becoming cephalised. Before the appearance of man, life consisted of a vast array of separate branches, linked only by an unorganised pattern of ecological interaction. The incipient development of mankind into a single psychosocial unit, with a single noosystem of common pool of thought, is providing the evolutionary process with the rudiments of a head. It remains for our descendants to organise this global noosystem more adequately, so as to enable mankind to understand the process of evolution on earth more fully and to direct it more adequately.

“I had independently expressed something of the same sort, by saying that in modern scientific man, evolution was at last becoming conscious of itself—a phrase which I found delighted Père Teilhard. His formulation, however, is more profound and more seminal: it implies that we should consider inter-thinking humanity as a new type of organism, whose destiny it is to realise new possibilities for evolving life on this planet.”

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“During evolution, awareness (or ‘if you prefer, the mental properties of living matter) becomes increasingly important to organisms, until in mankind it becomes the most important characteristic of life, and gives the human type its dominant position.

“After this critical point has been passed, evolution takes on a new character: it becomes primarily a psychosocial process, based on the cumulative transmission of experience and its results, and working through an organised system of awareness, a combined operation of knowing, feeling and willing. In man, at least during the historical and proto-historical periods, evolution has been characterised more by cultural than by genetic or biological change.

“On this new psychosocial level, the evolutionary process leads to new types and higher degrees of organisation. On the one hand there are new patterns of co-operation among individuals—co-operation for practical control, for enjoyment, for education and notably in the last few centuries, for obtaining new knowledge; and on the

other there are new patterns of thought, new organisations of awareness and its products.

“As a result, new and often wholly unexpected possibilities have been realised, the variety and degree of human fulfilment has been increased. Père Teilhard enables us to see which possibilities are in the long run desirable. What is more, he has helped to define the conditions of advance, the conditions which will permit an increase of fulfilment and prevent an increase of frustration. The conditions of advance are these: global unity of mankind’s noetic organisation or system of awareness, but a high degree of variety within that unity; love, with goodwill and full co-operation; personal integration and internal harmony; and increasing knowledge.”

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“We, mankind, contain the possibilities of the earth’s immense future, and can realise more and more of them on condition that we increase our knowledge and our love. That, it seems to me, is the distillation of *The Phenomenon of Man*.”

And Bergson’s concluding sentences of his “Two Sources of Morality and Religion”:

“Mankind lies groaning, half crushed beneath the weight of its own progress. Men do not sufficiently realise that their future is in their own hands. Theirs is the task of determining first of all whether they want to go on living or not. Theirs the responsibility, then, for deciding if they want merely to live or intend to make just the extra effort required for fulfilling, even on their refractory planet, the essential function of the universe, which is a machine for the making of gods.”

But these are yet ventures, however well-supported, in the realm of thought. For the integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother it becomes a practical proposition, even though most adventurous and extremely difficult. In Sri Aurobindo we find the higher planes observed and characterised in great detail; their cognitions, conations and affections well stated and duly organised and inter-related; the new worlds which they create also cogently shown. All this makes a most illuminating study. We clearly see and feel that this

disjointed world of facts, this vast plurality, this struggle of egos, is not the end of the matter, that a vivid unity rules all over this, which transforms this apparent purposelessness into a coherent and well-directed movement. This is a great fact of experience of high philosophical consequence.

However, the plane of consciousness called by Sri Aurobindo the supermind is the one where the absolute unity of the absolute consciousness, the highest spiritual Reality, and the emergent pluralities of life and existence meet. The experience of this plane, its cognitions, conations and affections are the decisive experience of the relationship between the Brahman and the World. There one, as it were, sees the World emerging out of the Brahman. How important are these facts of experience of the higher planes of consciousness!

Philosophy has progressively widened its sphere of experience for an interpretation and construction of truth and reality. But these higher planes have been explored and recognised in a very inadequate manner. A true recognition of them and their facts of experience, even when available to yet an extremely limited number of persons, is of the highest significance and greatest promise. All the difficulties and problems, particularly the insoluble ones, of the mental plane are likely to receive a new orientation and discover new prospects of solution.

The integral yoga delineates the processes and stages of growth through which an individual can rise to those higher planes and verify the facts of existence relative to them. Reason and intellect and a philosophy relying on them exclusively has to resort to speculative activity in order to know the nature of the Absolute and its relation with the world. But the integral yoga opens up a new possibility in philosophy. It offers a system of self-education by which an individual can achieve higher and higher integrations of consciousness and varied new perceptions of truth and reality. The conceptions of speculative reason thus get a chance of reference to actual facts of experience of other levels of consciousness.

In this connection Sri Aurobindo shows how a larger and a wider contact between the human plane and these higher planes can lead to a heightening and widening of consciousness in man and

thus to a reduction of the force of egoism, which is the essential cause of human ignorance, its prejudice, its anxiety and its insecurity. A contact and a commerce with the highest of these planes, the plane of the Supramental Truth, which embodies the full integral unity, can bring about a radical transformation and an effective elimination of egoism from human nature. This process has its application to the individual as well as the collectivity. That is to say, individuals can aspire, make contacts and have commerce with the higher planes and become transformed. The collectivity too by its aspiration and effort and appropriate forces of civilisation and culture can make the same contact, have similar commerce and become progressively raised in its level of consciousness, in the width and height of consciousness.

All this points to the possibility of a new quality of living among men, a quality of wide universality and high integrality, one progressively free from egoism. Such men will in fact be men only in the appearance of their body, in consciousness they will be a new type. This type in its inceptive beginning will naturally consist of a few individuals and they are bound to set up new standards in life and thought and feeling which will necessarily begin to exercise a wide influence in society.

To the mechanism of commerce between the human plane and the highest supramental plane, in the individual and collectivity, belongs another moment of great significance, which Sri Aurobindo and the Mother call the Descent of the Supermind from above and the Emergence of the involved Supermind from below. These are in their essential nature universal factors, which basically affect the collectivity of man. Evolution of man and his life is essentially a matter of higher and higher descents evoking corresponding emergences in human life. The growth of mind in man can be easily surveyed so far as the emergence of mind is concerned. But this emergence could not have taken place out of non-mind. And a full view of existence and its various planes and their mutual relations and dealings seem easily to suggest that a descent from a higher plane should enable and facilitate an emergence and upliftment in the evolving nature.

An appreciation of this moment of the descent of the universal

supermind enabling and facilitating the emergence of the supramental quality in man, can greatly help the visualisation of the possibility of a new type and race, a type and race of men with a new quality of life and consciousness.

The contemporary situation of man is marked by a surprising weakening of old standards and a remarkable turning of mind towards the new and the possible. This is the essence of the crisis we are living through. We all feel shaken up and extremely unsure and unclear and yet persistently try new solutions, one after the other. Is this not exactly the situation preparing for new values, new standards, a new creation in life. We are very often dominated by the breaking down and the disintegration of things, but the new integration too is there and not unnoticeable in a calmer and a happier state of mind.

The persistent question to ask in a universal and a long continuing situation like this is, what is it that is in the offing in this curious and intriguing pattern of things? That would be the minimum of attitude that an intelligent man, a fairly conscious person, can take towards the world of today. And if he does so, and persists sincerely in that, hoping for clarifications, it will be interesting to observe the clarities and certitudes that might emerge. If new creative forces are in the offing, then they are surely operative behind the appearances of things. And if we do not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the apparent occurrences, we are sure to contact the forces in the offing and feel them and learn to know them too more or less.

INDRA SEN

SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING CONSCIOUSNESS

VIII. THE MIND-CONSCIOUSNESS: ITS ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES

A black veil has been lifted; we have seen
The mighty shadow of the omniscient Lord;
But who has lifted up the veil of light
And who has seen the body of the King?
(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book III Canto II, p.352)

It is certain that you won't be able to know the Atman through the mind. You have to go beyond the mind. As there is no instrument beyond the mind—for only the Atman exists there—there the object of knowledge becomes the same as the instrument of knowledge...It is therefore that the Shruti says, '*Vijñātāramare kena vijānīyāt*—Through what are you to know the Eternal Subject?'
(Swami Vivekananda, Complete Works, Vol. VII, P.142)

If the Mind were the last word and there were nothing beyond it except the pure Spirit, I would not be averse to accepting it (Mayavad with its sole stress on Nirvana) as the only way out...But my experience is that there is something beyond mind; Mind is not the last word here of the Spirit....'There is a Truth-Consciousness, not static only and self-introspective, but also dynamic and creative...
(Sri Aurobindo *On Himself and on the Mother*, p. 157)

WE have seen that for the seeker of the Integral Yoga the realisation of the 'passive Brahman', of the pure quiescent self-existence independent of all world-play, cannot be more than the necessary first basis. We cannot rest with an utter withdrawal in consciousness from the universal manifestation. We must instead return upon the world of action and creation and seek to repossess and remould our mind, life and body with the luminous dynamis of the 'active Brahman' and identify ourselves, freely and in the infinite

self-delight of the Being, with all the outpouring of Chit-Tapas, of consciousness and its creative Force, in Time and in Space.

But the goal is easier stated than realised. For, almost on universal evidence, any great stress of dynamism generally obscures the inner vision, brings in a relative loss of the Peace and Silence of the soul, and otherwise tends to lower the status of spiritual attainment.

But this disability arises from the fact that attempts to possess the active Brahman have so far been made exclusively through the Mind-consciousness. And since Mind, the great divider, suffers from some intrinsic and irremediable limitations these attempts have been foredoomed to failure.

But the question may be raised: since Mind, in the actually evolved existence, is the highest possible instrument available and since there is no other still higher organised power through which to realise the Self or Brahman or to possess divinely the world, is it not almost axiomatic that the transformation of our dynamic waking existence as we envisage in our sadhana is an impossible proposition?

Of course, if the above assumption is correct, the liberation and transformation of our embodied existence would be impossible here upon earth, and instead of running after the *ignis fatuus* it would be more sensible to pass away into the Superconscient and not to seek to bring down the Superconscient into the field of our waking consciousness.

As a matter of fact, this has been so far the general trend. For "in the ordinary Yoga...it is only necessary to recognise two planes of our consciousness, the spiritual and materialised mental; the pure reason standing between these two views them both, cuts through the illusions of the phenomenal world, exceeds the materialised mental plane, sees the reality of the spiritual; and then the will of the individual Purusha unifying itself with this poise of knowledge rejects the lower and draws back to the supreme plane, dwells there, loses mind and body, sheds life from it and merges itself in the supreme Purusha, is delivered from individual existence."¹

But a deeper and higher spiritual exploration reveals the fact that the above assumption is not correct after all. Mind is not

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, pp. 508-09.

the highest principle of cosmic existence, with only the pure spirit, the Impersonal Absolute beyond itself. As a matter of fact, there is a hierarchy of superior principles far transcending the normal mind-consciousness and consequently at present superconscious to it. A supreme Truth-Consciousness, *rita-cit*, which Sri Aurobindo terms as Supermind, tops the series and this is a Power not merely static and introspective but supremely dynamic and creative. It is this Supermind that must be consciously possessed and made to descend into our earth-nature if we would have a transformed waking existence. Otherwise a static release remains the sole possibility before the spiritual seeker.

Unfortunately, the knowledge of the existence of these supernal planes of our being has been almost lost to the spiritual memory of the race with all the adverse consequences attendant upon it. In ancient lore, "in the Upanishad (usually the Taittiriya) there are some indications of these higher planes and their nature and the possibility of gathering up the whole consciousness and rising into them. But this was forgotten afterwards and people spoke only of the buddhi as the highest thing with the Purusha or Self just above, but there was no clear idea of these planes."¹

Now, so long as these higher spiritual planes of the mental being and finally the plane of Supermind are not consciously possessed and made active and organised in the normal consciousness of the embodied being, so long as the spiritualised mind approaches the Supreme directly and not passing through this Truth-Consciousness, the supramental Gnosis, one is bound to experience difficulties from the point of view of the realisation of our goal, both in the mind's ascent and in its attempted realisation of the active Brahman.

Let us have a bird's-eye view of some of the more salient difficulties encountered and, at the same time, of the achievements of Mind as well as of its failures.

The Ascent and Illusoriness: If Mind is taken to be the highest possible cosmic principle and since the Absolute is not seizable by the mind-consciousness, the seeker of the traditional Yogas tries to

¹ Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother, pp. 175-76.

get away from the mortal failings of mind into the superconscious Infinite, by shedding all its activities and formations, making a blank of it and finally 'engulfing it in the Unmanifest,' *parama-vyaktam*.

In this progressive withdrawal from mind-consciousness, the sadhak comes to realise the *Sad-Atman*, the "pure, still, self-aware existence, one, undivided, peaceful, inactive, undisturbed by the action of the world."¹

Although this *Sad-Atman* is the unique Origin and Sustainer of everything, *sarvāṇi hyetad brahma*,² being itself passive, the only relation it appears to have with this world of manifestation is that of "a disinterested Witness not at all involved in or affected or even touched by any of its activities."³

When one pushes farther this state of consciousness, one comes to realise 'an aloof and transcendent Real Existence' appearing to have no connection or commerce at all with the world-existence.

When the mental being seeks to go still beyond, it negates yet further and arrives at an *Asat*, "a Void of everything that is here, a Void of unnameable peace and extinction of all, even of the *Sat*, even of that Existent which is the impersonal basis of individual or universal personality."⁴ It is this *Asat* arrived at by the absolute annulment of mind-existence and world-existence, that has been variously termed as *Turiya* or featureless and relationless Absolute by the monistic Vedantins, the *Shunyam* by the nihilistic *Madhyamika* Buddhists, the *Tao* or omnipresent and transcendent *Nihil* by the Chinese, and as the indefinable and ineffable Permanent by the Mahayanists.⁵

Many Christian mystics also, notably St. John of the Cross with his doctrine of *noche obscura*, speak of 'a complete ignorance', 'a divine Darkness' through which the spiritualised Mind has to pass before one can expect to attain to the supreme experience. And it is because of this incompatibility of Mind-consciousness with the

The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 458.

Mandukya Upanishad, 2.

The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 458.

Ibid., p. 417.

On Yoga II, p. 67.

experience of the Absolute that so many systems of spiritual discipline have come to condemn the cosmic play. As a matter of fact, it is this very incompatibility that is at the basis of the Illusionism that "takes such firm hold of the human mind in its highest overleapings of itself."¹

If without any intermediate transitions, without awakening in the supernal reaches of our existence, of which we have already spoken, the Mind tries to take a short-cut and pass suddenly the 'gates of the Transcendent' where stands 'the mere and perfect Spirit', the inactive Brahman, the transcendent Silence, a sense of utter unreality and illusory character of all cosmic existence seizes it in a most convincing and overwhelming experience. "The universe and all that is...appears [then] to the mind as a dream more unsubstantial than any dream ever seen or imagined, so that even the word dream seems too positive a thing to express its entire unreality."²

But this universal Illusionism is not a necessary concomitant of the supreme spiritual experience. If instead of the mind's abrupt samadhi-plunge into the mystic sleep state of *susupti* that is now superconscient and therefore inaccessible to it, one succeeds in acquiring spiritual awakening in the supernal states intervening between the Mind and the Spirit, one does not pass through the perception of an illusionary Maya, but rather has "the experience of the passage from Mind to what is beyond it so that our mental structure of the universe ceases to be valid and another reality of it is substituted for the ignorant mental knowledge. In this transition it is possible to be awake to all the states of being together in a harmonised and unified experience and to see the Reality everywhere."³ Then we experience, as Sri Aurobindo has so beautifully put, that it is not an unreal or real-unreal universe that is reposing on a transcendent Reality, but a real universe reposing on a Reality at once universal and transcendent or absolute.⁴

For even beyond the *avyaktam*, the Unmanifest, beyond the

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 418.

² *Ibid.*, p. 417.

³ *The Life Divine*, p. 406.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

divine Darkness, *tamasah parastāt*, is the Supreme One Existence, *ekam advaitam*, the Para Purusha who holds in His vast integral Reality the truth of cosmic consciousness as well as that of the Nirvana of world-consciousness. He is beyond the duality and the non-duality, *paratah parah*¹ and is *ādityavārṇa* in contrast to the darkness of the Unmanifest. He is the Light of Lights, *jyotiṣām jyotiḥ*,² and lies in a supreme golden sheath, *hiraṇmaye pare koṣe*.³ Indeed, "the sun in the Yoga is the symbol of the supermind and the supermind is the first power of the Supreme which one meets across the border where the experience of spiritualised mind ceases and the unmodified divine consciousness begins the domain of the supreme Nature, *Parā Prakṛti*. It is that Light of which the Vedic mystics got a glimpse, and it is the opposite of the intervening darkness of the Christian mystics, for the supermind is all light and no darkness. To the mind the Supreme is *avyaktāt param avyaktam*, but if we follow the line leading to the supermind, it is an increasing affirmation rather than an increasing negation through which we move."⁴ (Italics ours)

We have so far dwelt upon the disabilities that the mind-consciousness suffers from on its way of ascension to the summits of spiritual consciousness or rather superconsciousness. Now let us turn our gaze on the limitations that vitiate its attempt at complete possession of the active Brahman, when it seeks to return from the summit and embrace the life of action and creation.

The incomplete possession of the active Brahman: It is of course true that our normal consciousness, even at its waking moments, can become aware of Brahman through a process of inward concentration. But the point to note is that it is only the static and passive aspect of Brahman that is thus apprehended, not its active and dynamic side.

The result is that in its return upon world-existence the mental being finds a wall of non-communication between the passive and

¹ *Mundaka Upanishad*, II. 1.2.

², ³ *Ibid.*, II 2.10.

⁴ *On Yoga* II, pp. 67-68.

the active Brahman and all dynamic activity appears to its stilled and inactive consciousness either as a hallucination or a dream, or like a puppet show, or even as a purely mechanical action brought about by the play of Prakriti without any active participation of Purusha. The incommunicability may sometimes be so strong, the gulf separating the inner consciousness and the dynamic outer being so wide that to all outward appearances the seeker may "move about like a thing inert in the hands of Nature, *jaḍavat*, like a leaf in the wind, or otherwise [in] a state of pure happy and free irresponsibility of action, *bālavat*.... The outer being [may] live in a God-possessed frenzy careless of itself and the world, *unmattavat*, or with an entire disregard whether of the conventions and proprieties of fitting human action or of the harmony and rhythms of a greater Truth. It acts as the unbound vital being, *piśacavat*, the divine maniac or else the divine demoniac.¹

But this sort of 'static possession by the Self' or 'the unregulated dynamic possession by the physical and vital Nature' is far removed from the goal of the Integral Yoga, for what we aim at is the "mastery of the Prakriti by the Purusha [and] the sublimation of Nature into her own supreme power, the infinite glories of the Para Shakti."²

Confronted with this inability to participate actively in the dynamic manifestation without at the same time losing the possession of the freedom and peace of the silent Self, the mental being gets tempted to adopt the attitude of an indifferent and inactive witness of the world-play and at the best allow his organs of sense and motor-action a free play of their own unsupported by any conscious initiation on the part of the witnessing self. The ideal of course is to reduce action to the barest minimum possible compatible with the maintenance of the bodily life.

Of course, there is another possibility, an alternative choice. Through a proper discipline one may come to a state where a perfect inner passivity may co-exist with perfect outer dynamism but altogether independent of each other. In this situation it is not the

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 569.

² *Ibid.*

willed motive of the conscious mind in the sadhaka that initiates and effectuates the activity, but rather the universal intelligence and will of Nature that uses the living instrument and works flawlessly from centres superconscious or subliminal to the conscious mind.

But this too is not what we seek to realise in our Yoga of dynamic divinisation. For in this particular status of inner passivity and outer action by the mere organs, *kevalair indriyair*, "there is an evident absence of integrality; for there is still a gulf, an unrealised unity or a cleft of consciousness between the passive and the active Brahman. We have still to possess consciously the active Brahman without losing the possession of the silent Self. We have to preserve the inner silence, tranquility, passivity as a foundation; but in place of an aloof indifference to the works of the active Brahman we have to arrive at an equal and impartial delight in them; in place of a refusal to participate lest our freedom and peace be lost, we have to arrive at a conscious possession of the active Brahman whose joy of existence does not abrogate His peace, nor His lordship of all workings impair His calm freedom in the midst of His works."¹ But the crucial question is: is it at all possible for the mental being in his actually evolved status to embrace at once, equally and fully, both the world and the being, both consciousness and action?

The Intrinsic Incapacity: To answer the above question we must first note that between the normal consciousness of man the mental being and a truly spiritual supra-mental consciousness, there lies a thick veil, an almost impenetrable lid, *satyasyāpihitam mukham*, and unless this veil is lifted and the lid removed, there is no possibility of knowing the divine, far be it to attain to it. But the difficulty is this that either through arduous tapasya or by an act of Grace from above, when the mental being succeeds in putting by the veil, it sees the Divine "as something above, beyond, around even in a sense, but with a gulf between that being and our being, *an unbridged or even an unbridgeable chasm*. There is this infinite existence; but it is quite other than the mental being who becomes aware of it.... There is this great, boundless, unconditioned consciousness and force; but our consciousness and force *stands apart* from it, even if within

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 463.

it, limited, petty, discouraged, disgusted with itself and the world, but *unable to participate* in that higher thing which it has seen. There is this immeasurable and unstained bliss; but our own being remains the sport of a lower Nature of pleasure and pain and dull neutral sensation incapable of its divine delight. There is this perfect Knowledge and Will; but our own remains always the mental deformed knowledge and limping will incapable of sharing in or even being in tune with that nature of Godhead.”¹ (*Italics ours*)

Now, in an attempt to bridge this chasm and heal the rift, the mental being seeks to rise through a Herculean all-forgetting effort out of itself into the Infinite above. But in this process “the mind has to *leave its own consciousness*, to disappear into another and temporarily or permanently lose *itself*... in the trance of Samadhi.”² For obvious reasons this mindless absolute trance-state cannot be our objective (vide Chap. V: The Critique of the Trance-Solution). Our aim is to transform the waking mentality itself, and for that we have to invoke another possibility open to the mental being.

As a matter of fact, mind has a great reflecting capability, reflecting whatever it knows and contemplates. Thus if it pacifies itself and calls down the divine into itself, it succeeds in reflecting the image of the divine and getting spiritualised. But the trouble is that in this operation “the mind does not entirely possess the divine or become divine, but is possessed by it or by a luminous reflection of it so long as it remains in....*pure passivity*.”³ The moment it becomes active, mind becomes turbid again and the reflection of the divine is lost.

Hence it is often declared that an absolute quietism and the cessation of all outer and inner action is the only way out of the above impasse. But evidently this fails to satisfy the demands of the Integral Yoga. What we seek is “a positive transformation and not merely a negative quiescence of the waking mentality.”⁴

But the basic difficulty with the mind-consciousness is that it is an inveterate divider of the indivisible, which dwells upon one aspect at a time to the exclusion of all others. For “mind in its essence

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 451.

² *Ibid.*, p. 411.

³, ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 454.

is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole and contains them as if each were a separate integer.... Mind may divide, multiply, add, subtract, but it cannot get beyond the limits of this mathematics. If it goes beyond and tries to conceive a real whole, it loses itself in a foreign element; it falls from its own firm ground into the ocean of the intangible, into the abysses of the infinite where it can neither perceive, conceive, sense nor deal with its subject for creation and enjoyment.... Mind cannot possess the infinite, it can only suffer it or be possessed by it; it can only lie blissfully helpless under the luminous shadow of the Real cast down on it from planes of existence beyond its reach.”¹

It is because of this inherent propensity to divide and overstress that the Mind cannot hold at once Unity and Multiplicity, consciousness and action, being and becoming; it cannot possess simultaneously the active and the passive Brahman. And because of Mind’s inability to possess the Infinite, if instead of being satisfied with the ‘luminous shadow’, golden lid, *hiranmayapātra*, one would seek to realise the utter Real, one has perforce to get rid of mind altogether and enter into the absolute mindless *susupti*. It is for this reason that so many seekers of the past have recommended *manonāśa* or the ‘annulment of the Mind’ as the via royal to the supreme spiritual experience.

Thus we find Sri Ramakrishna declaring: “The Knowledge of Brahman cannot be attained except through the annulment of Mind. A Guru asked his disciple, ‘Give me your mind and I shall give you knowledge.’ ”²

The Rajarshi Janaka of old declared, “Now I have awakened and discovered the thief that is Mind; I must kill it, must scorch it to death. For Mind is the root of this world of ignorance.”³

According to the great sage Vasishtha, a great good comes out of the destruction of Mind, *manaso’bhyudayo nāśo manonāśo mahodayaḥ*⁴, and the Mind of the knower of the Truth verily gets annuled, *jñānino nāśamabhyeti*.⁵ The Yoga-Skishopanishad too declares

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 151.

² *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathasar*, p. 296

³ *Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana*, V, 9

⁴ *Yoga-Vasishtha, Sthiti Prakaranam*, 35. 18.

⁵ *Ibid*,

that mindlessness is the supreme status, *na manah kevalaḥ paraḥ*.¹

Thus, almost on universal testimony, the ideal before the seeker after the Truth is to get to the state of mindlessness, *amanastā*, where the mind loses all its faculties, *yadā na manute manah* and becomes non-mind so to say, *unmanībhūyāt*.

What is then the solution for us who aspire after the liberty of divine action as well as after the liberation of divine rest ? If mind-consciousness inclusive of its highest spiritual reaches proves its inadequacy as an instrument and medium for the divine possession of our waking existence, what else cosmic principle is there that can help us to realise our goal ? For, for the proper fulfilment of our objective, "we have to review and remould the lower living in the light, force and joy of the higher reality. We have to realise Matter as a sense-created mould of Spirit, a vehicle for all manifestation of the light, force and joy of Sachchidananda in the highest conditions of terrestrial being and activity. We have to see Life as a channel for the infinite Force divine and break the barrier of a sense-created and mind-created farness and division from it so that divine Power may take possession of and direct and change all our life-activities until our vitality transfigured ceases in the end to be the limited life-force which now supports mind and body and becomes a figure of the all-blissful conscious force of Sachchidananda. We have similarly to change our sensational and emotional mentality into a play of divine Love and universal Delight; and we have to surcharge the intellect which seeks to know and will in us with the light of the divine Knowledge-Will until it is transformed into a figure of that higher and sublime activity."²

Such is then our high ideal, but how to realise it in practice, how to conquer the spiritual penury of our waking physical existence and embrace equally the active and passive aspects of the Divine? If Mind fails, what else is there that saves the situation?

¹ *Yogashikhopanishad*, 6.60.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 481.

APPENDIX

ASCENT FROM THE MIND-CONSCIOUSNESS

“ ‘Consent to be nothing and none, dissolve Time’s work,
Cast off thy mind, step back from form and name.
Annul thyself that only God may be.’

Thus spoke the mighty and uplifting Voice,
And Savitri heard; she bowed her head and *mused*
Plunging her deep regard into herself
In her soul’s privacy in the silent Night.
Aloof and standing back detached and calm,
A *witness* of the drama of herself,
A student of her own interior scene,
She *watched* the passion and the toil of life
And heard in the crowded thoroughfares of mind
The unceasing tread and passage of her thoughts.
All she *allowed* to rise that chose to stir;
Calling, compelling nought, forbidding nought,
She left all to the process formed in Time
And the free initiative of Nature’s will.

*
**

Above the birth of body and of thought
Our spirit’s truth lives in the naked self
And from that height, unbound, surveys the world.
Out of the mind she rose to escape its law
That it might *sleep* in some deep-shadow of self
Or fall *silent* in the silence of the Unseen.

*
**

Then all grew *tranquil* in her being’s space,
Only sometimes small thoughts arose and fell

Like quiet waves upon a silent sea
 Or ripples passing over a lonely pool
 When a stray stone disturbs its *dreaming rest*.
 Yet the mind's factory had ceased to work,
 There was no sound of the dynamo's throb,
 There came no call from the still fields of life.
Then even those stirrings rose in her no more;
 Her mind now seemed like a vast empty room
 Or like a peaceful landscape without sound.
 This men call *quietude* and prize as peace.
 But to her deeper sight *all yet was there*,
 Effervescing like a chaos under a lid;
 Feelings and thoughts cried out for word and act.
 But found no response in the *silenced brain*:
 All was *suppressed* but *nothing yet expunged*;
 At every moment might explosion come.
Then this too paused; the body seemed a stone.
 All now was a wide mighty vacancy,
 But *still excluded from eternity's hush*;
 For still was far the repose of the Absolute
 And the ocean Silence of Infinity,
Even now some thoughts could cross her solitude:
 These surged not from the depths or from within
 Cast up from formlessness to seek a form,
 Spoke not the body's need nor voiced mind's call.
 These seemed not born nor made in human Time,

**

Out of some far expanse they seemed to come
 As if carried on vast wings like large white sails,
 And with easy access reached the inner ear.

**

As yet their path lay deep concealed in light.
 Then looking to know whence the intruders came

She saw a spiritual immensity
Pervading and encompassing the world-space
As ether our transparent tangible air,
And through it sailing tranquilly a thought.

*
**

As smoothly glides a ship nearing a port,

*
**

It came to *the silent city of the brain*
Towards its accustomed and expectant quay,
But met a barring will, a blow of Force
And *sank vanishing* in the immensity.
After a long vacant pause another appeared
And others one by one suddenly emerged,
Mind's unexpected visitors from the unseen
Like far-off sails upon a lonely sea.
But soon that commerce failed, none reached mind's coast.
Then all grew still, nothing moved any more:
Immobile, self-rapt, timeless, solitary
A silent spirit pervaded silent Space.

In that *absolute stillness* bare and formidable
There was glimpsed *an all-negating Void* supreme
That claimed its mystic Nihil's sovereign right
To cancel Nature and deny the soul.
Even the nude sense of self grew pale and thin:
Impersonal, signless, featureless, void of forms
A blank pure consciousness had replaced the mind.

*
**

Yet still her body saw and moved and spoke;
It understood without the aid of thought,
It said whatever needed to be said,

THE ADVENT

It did whatever needed to be done.
There was *no person there behind the act*,
No mind that chose or passed the fitting word:
All wrought like an unerring apt machine.
As if continuing old habitual turns,
And pushed by an old unexhausted force
The engine did the work for which it was made:
Her consciousness looked on and took no part;

*
**

This seeing was identical with the seen;
It knew without knowledge all that could be known,
It saw impartially the world go by,
But in the same supreme unmoving glance
Saw too its *abysmal unreality*.
It watched the figure of the cosmic game,
But the thought and inner life in forms seemed dead
Abolished by her own collapse of thought:
A hollow physical shell persisted still.

*
**

Once sepulchred alive in brain and flesh
She had risen up from body, mind and life;
She was no more a Person in a world,
She had *escaped into infinity*.

*
**

Only some *last annulment* now remained,
Annihilation's vague indefinable step:"

(Italics ours)

(From Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, Book VII Canto VI, pp, 611-23)

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

PAST MEMORIES (II)

I HAD sent a copy of my causerie on Past Memories to the friend who had forwarded the press cutting that set me thinking on the subject. He has written a very cogent and interesting letter raising a number of legitimate and crucial questions. "Is there no drawable memory, of details," he asks, "surrounding circumstances etc. for any one, in any circumstances?"

I would at once answer *there is*. When I said that detailed past memories of past lives is not possible because the sheaths that carry them fall away in transit after death, I set down only the general rule. That is what happens in the case of most people. But there can be cases of individuals—however few—who are well developed in the scale of evolution, who have sufficiently integrated their vital and mental bodies around their soul, the psychic being. When such persons leave their physical body, they do not need to cast off—they are not obliged to do it—their vital and mental bodies. They carry these personalities organised around their central being to their place of rest. And when they come back for their next embodiment on earth, naturally the past mental and vital bodies are brought along and a fresh career of growth is begun. When such an individual looks back with the appropriate concentration or poise, he can certainly summon the past memories to his active consciousness. The layers of consciousness that recorded those events have not been dissolved and hence their contents are available for one who knows how to tap them.

There is also what is called the *terrestrial* memory, at each level of the universe e.g. physical, vital, mental etc. Every thing that passes is recorded faithfully in his cosmic memory. Not only what happened but also what tried to happen. If one can enter into these layers of the universal consciousness through one's subliminal being, it is possible to obtain whatever detailed information one wants from the past—the past of oneself, the past of others as well. Usually this calls for a special type of concentration, *samyama* of Patanjali; but for some this capacity comes as a natural gift. One has to extend

oneself in consciousness and contact the relevant levels of the terrestrial memory in the universe.

Another point. Since the essence of all the past is there embedded in the soul, every thing that has happened in one's career must be there in however concentrated a form and theoretically it should be possible to trace things to their roots. But there are practical difficulties of which I have spoken before.

Another question he asks is: "May not memory be a help in one's progress, rather than a hindrance, when one has progressed enough?" I am afraid not. Whatever can be helpful in the present embodiment from the past is already made an active part of the equipment with which one comes to birth after the intervening period of assimilation and preparation. What is not relevant is put aside. If any new factors intervene in life necessitating some knowledge gained in the past, the divine agency that presides over the particular evolutionary progression sees to it that that help is given in some form or other. But normally when one comes to birth, one has chosen one's field of experience, the objective of experience, and brings all that is necessary for launching upon that effort from the past gains. What has not been brought has been deliberately excluded and should not be looked for.

PRABUDDHA

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

THE MOTHER IS ALWAYS WITH US

IN Sri Aurobindo Ashram almost all believe that the Mother is always with them. It is with most a faith, with some a knowledge. Some have had experiences of her presence and felt her working in them. Their experiences and feelings are so concretely real, so psychologically factual, that no doubt can deny them. They are woven into the very stuff of their consciousness. The knowledge derived from them is self-evident, and needs no outer proofs to confirm it. Its effects upon their life and nature are various and incalculable. To impugn the reality of this kind of knowledge would be as absurd and irrational as to impugn the reality of one's own existence or one's own feelings. It is not a mental knowledge which can be reasonably questioned—it is a light, a vision, a gleaming vibration in the very grain of ones' consciousness, which defies all challenge and analysis.

But those who, in default of such knowledge and experience, have only a sincere faith in the Mother's presence being always with them, are none the less capable of profiting by her help and protection. Faith works miracles. A sincere faith is a smiling welcome to Grace. "People do not know," says the Mother, "how important is faith, how faith is miracle, a creator of miracles." The history of spiritual life resounds with the triumph-songs of faith.

But in what sense is the Mother always with us? Years ago a message from Sri Aurobindo was put up everywhere in the Ashram: "Always behave as if the Mother was looking at you, for she is, indeed, always present." What does that message mean? In what sense is it true to say that the Mother is always with us?

According to the Mother, it is true in the following senses. The Mother's Force works constantly in all those who are doing the integral Yoga. It is at work introducing order into the habitual chaos and disorder of their nature. It makes them aware of the different and divergent aspects of their being, so that they may see what in them has to be rejected, what is to be transformed, and what to be deve-

loped. Many of them in the beginning of their Yoga do not clearly perceive what she is doing or whether she is doing anything at all in them. But that does not prevent them from reaping the fruit of her action. Sometimes her Force works better, because with less interference, when the surface mind of the sadhakas is at rest or unaware of it. But often a conscious cooperation of our being ensures greater and quicker progress. Whatever that may be, the Mother's Force is unwearied and unsleeping, and so long as they do not resist or oppose it, it does not let them wallow in easeful ignorance or stagnate in inertia.

Then, there exists a special relation between the Mother and all those who have accepted the ideal held up before mankind by her and Sri Aurobindo. A subtle, a very effective relation—the Mother calls it a tie—exists which determines their destiny. Once they have accepted the ideal of a dynamic spiritual life, the ideal of an integral transformation of their earthly nature into the divine Nature and the manifestation of the Divine in every part of their being and life, the Mother's Light leads them, releasing them from the trammels of past tradition. All life is Yoga. No flight from the life of action in horror of Maya, but the transmutation of the very bases of earthly life, the conquest and conversion of the forces of darkness and falsehood which rule the earth nature, and the creation of a new order of God-centred, God-guided, God-revealing life—this is the Mother's gospel to modern man. To those who have accepted this all-inclusive ideal and are striving to realise it, her help and protection are constant. Distance is no bar to their transmission. "You may be in France, you may be at the other end of the world or at Pondicherry, the tie is always true and living." Whenever and wherever one prays to her or calls for her help, she responds, she succours, she fortifies and delivers. These calls and prayers reach her at any moment, and she suddenly stops in the midst of her work or talk, concentrates and responds. One's faith in her working is vindicated and strengthened time and again as one opens to her Force and remains receptive and plastic to it. Whenever one stumbles or falls, whenever one is harassed by a problem or dismayed by adverse circumstances, one has only to call with confidence, and the response is there. The Mother does not say, "Stand upon your

own legs, depend upon your self, be a lamp unto yourself." She says on the contrary, "All my power is with you; open yourself with a calm confidence, have faith in the Divine Grace, and you will overcome all your difficulties," "My help is with you and you will never fail. My love is with you and will never fail you. I am indeed the Friend of the bad days and the Companion in the ascent towards Truth, where the Lord will carry you for ever in His all-mighty arms." She does not abandon her children, weak and ignorant, to their own petty resources. Her physical presence in the material world is an opportunity for their integral transformation.

Does this attitude of surrender to the Mother and total reliance upon her Force imply abdication of our individuality and denial of *puruṣakāra* or personal manly exertion and self-reliance? But what is *puruṣakāra*? Which is the real *puruṣa* in us—our ignorant, perishable, egoistic self, or the Supreme Person, Param Purusha, seated in our hearts? If it is the latter, then, surrender to His Shakti is the highest *puruṣakāra*.

There is another tie. An emanation goes out of the Mother to everyone she has accepted as her disciple. This is more than a relation; it is a tie, and yet more than a tie—more intimate, more searchingly active, more powerfully effective. This emanation keeps her informed of what goes on in each of her disciples. There have been a good many cases in which, for some reason or other, she has had to reveal not only one's secret thoughts and feelings, but even what one has done or where one has gone during a particular day. As if the whole thing had passed before her like a cinema show. There is nothing that can be kept hidden from her, nothing that can be disguised or curtailed off. "This emanation warns me whenever it is necessary and tells me what is happening. Indeed I receive intimations constantly, but all are not recorded in my active memory, I would be flooded; the physical consciousness acts like a filter. Things are recorded in a subtle plane, they are there in a latent state, something like a piece of music that is recorded without being played. When I need to know with my physical consciousness, I make the contact with the subtle physical plane and the disk begins to turn. Then I see how things are, their development in time, the actual result. And if for some reason or other, you write to me

asking for my help and I answer 'I am with you', it means that the communication with you becomes active, you come in my active consciousness for a time, for the time necessary."

Those who think that revolt or disobedience of her children provokes the Mother's anger or displeasure or that she turns her face away from them, only read their all too human reactions into her consciousness. There can be no repulsion, anger or hatred in the Divine Consciousness of the Mother, for she sees the Divine in all, she sees herself in all. She would not be the Divine Mother if such human feelings arose in her. All are her children, those who stumble and fall as well as those who advance with steady steps towards the goal. For her there is only the One, and all are He. Her Love, her Compassion, her Solicitude for her children are infinite, because she is the Infinite. She never rejects or forgets her children. "And this tie between you and me is never cut. There are people who have long ago left the Ashram in a state of revolt, and yet I keep myself informed of them, I attend to them. You are never abandoned." "In fact, I hold myself responsible for everyone, even for those whom I have met only for one second in my life."

All Yogas are difficult and arduous, for liberation from the ego and the bondage of the lower Nature cannot be effected at a single stroke. And the integral Yoga of the Mother and Sri Aurobindo, which really begins where the other Yogas end, appears at the first blush as almost impossible of achievement. It aims at the illumination and transformation of the subconscious and inconscient bases of human existence and a dynamic union with the Supreme Divine, a union in His universal play as well as in His Transcendent Silence, an integral union in life and beyond life at the same time. In it the very obstacles of spiritual life are sought to be conquered and turned into forces of realisation, the very enemies are embraced and converted into helpful allies. But in spite of all these enormous difficulties, it is the safest and surest Yoga, because it is the Divine Shakti, the Mother, who does it in her children. But for her, it would be an impossible venture. Because of her, it is the most perfect and the most fully satisfying pursuit of human life, the only Yoga of divine fulfilment for modern man. What his limited, faltering power cannot hope to achieve, the illimitable Power of the Mother promises to

achieve for him. "The Mother's power and not any human endeavour and tapasya can alone rend the lid and tear the covering and shape the vessel and bring down into the world of obscurity and falsehood and death and suffering Truth and Light and life divine and the immortal's Ananda." The Mother's presence, the Mother's Grace and guidance, are, therefore, the sole condition of progress in the integral Yoga. If we attain our goal, it is only because she is always with us.

RISHABHCHAND

THE LIFE DIVINE

(A Brief Summary)

CHAPTER XXX

MEMORY, EGO AND SELF-EXPERIENCE

CONSCIOUSNESS of Self has two different aspects, the awareness of a stable, immutable and timeless Self beyond mentality and the awareness of a various self-experience in the process of Time and the field of Space. There is a constant shifting of the point of Time, a constant though less obvious changing of the habitation and the environment and in these a constant subjection modifying the experience of the states of personality and the experience of the environment.

Memory here is an indispensable factor in the linking of past and present experience and is necessary to secure its continuity and coherence. Still Memory is not all; it is only a mediator between the mind-sense and the coordinating mind.

It is the mind-sense which shapes the object of experience as a wave of the conscious being into a movement of emotion, vitality, sensation or thought-perception. There is also an act of mental observation and valuation of this wave of the sense-mind. There is also the subject or mental being who thus modifies his mental becoming and observes and values it by an act of mind. It is when the mental being stands back from the mental becoming and even from the mental act that he begins to perceive himself as something different from all becoming, mutable in that, but immutable beyond it. He is not two selves, one that is and one that becomes, but one immutable who sees changing phenomena of his being, the immutability evident to a direct and pure self-consciousness, the mutable evident indirectly through a conditional and secondary mental consciousness.

It is the character of this indirect mental consciousness which can experience only by succession of Time that brings in the device

of Memory. Memory is not the essence of mental experience of becoming, nor of its continuity, nor of the recurrence of the same experience or the same cause and effect in Time. These are the circumstances of the movement of the stuff of conscious being and conscious force of being, a movement which is really undivided though only seen by mind in artificial divisions. Memory is a device by which the experiences of the mind-sense are linked together and these artificial divisions in Time bridged over so that the coordinating mind and will may better and better use the material of experience and impose order on its conscious knowledge of its self and its conscious action in its environment. It is an aid to our ignorance of self-developing, in the evolution of mind out of inconscient force, knowledge of self by experience.

The ego-sense is a mental device by which the mental being develops towards knowledge of that which experiences as well as of that which is experienced. Memory only tells us that the successive experiences have happened in the same field of conscious being; it is the coordinating and distinguishing mind which tells us that it is the same mental being who experiences.

Mind-substance suffers the changes of becoming, mind-sense experiences them; memory assures the mind-sense of its continuity of experience; the coordinating mind of knowledge relates them together and relates them also to the ego or being who, it says, is the same in past and present whether he forgets or remembers. In the animal this may be little more than a coordination in the sense-mind by a discernment largely involved in the sensations and the memories, but in man it becomes a coordinating reason superior to sense and memory. It is by this development that the ego sense becomes distinct and disengaged from its aids.

But it is itself only a device and basis for self-development of true self-knowledge; it is a stage in the evolution from nescience to partial knowledge and from partial knowledge to true self-knowledge. The evolving Mind becomes by it aware of an 'I' that becomes and then of a self superior to the becoming. It may fix on either to the rejection of the other, but in doing so it acts on an imperfect self-knowledge. It is as yet ignorant of all even of the individual becoming which is not superficial; ignorant of the universal becoming

except indirectly, as a not-self exterior to it. Its attempt to find the true relation of the self and its becoming is based therefore on an Ignorance, that can only be truly known by an attempt to live out the relation in an integral development of self-knowledge. This is the natural goal of our evolution which is the movement of the Ignorance to exceed itself and arrive at the conscious Truth of its being and conscious knowledge of all being.

SRI AUROBINDO

REVIEWS

A Marvel of Cultural Fellowship by *Sisirkumar Mitra*. Published by Lalvani Publishing House, Bombay 1. Pages 135.

The book is an enlarged edition of the author's *Cultural Fellowship of Bengal*, first published in 1946. In its present form it has two Parts: the first, a new addition on Rabindranath Tagore (Some Recollections), because, in the author's words, 'he has been in our day the shining embodiment of India's cultural fellowship', and on 'Voice of Bengal's Soul', also new, because 'it is her language and literature that has brought the far and the near into the heart of her fellowship'. Apparently disparate, the two parts are relevantly interlinked and Part One serves as the necessary background of Part Two.

Part Two contains Introduction and five chapters: 1) The Cults of Bengal—The Basis of Her Fellowship; 2) Bengal Greater than Herself; 3) Fellowship through Interfusion of Cults; 4) Cultural Fellowship in Medieval Bengal; 5) Towards a Larger Fellowship, besides Glossary of Indian terms and Index.

The first four chapters show how old Bengal, a vast geographical area, then called Panchagauda, was greater than herself by virtue of her cultural expansion through her three famous universities on her borders and through her scholars, sages, saints, artists, philosophers, administrators, rulers playing their respective roles all over India and beyond, e.g., Tibet, China, Japan, S.E. Asia, Ceylon etc.; how her fellowship broadened by interfusion of cults and their followers; how in medieval Bengal her cultural fellowship, already widely based on numerous facts of history, blossomed into fairly well deep-seated Hindu-Muslim amity. Its extent and the spontaneity of its multifaceted expressions can be gauged by a study of the massive array of facts given in the book. The dynamic spiritual force that swept away all barriers between man and man, race and race, during this period, was the flood-tide of divine Love released by Sri Chaitanya.

The last Chapter on "Towards a Larger Fellowship" deals with

the modern age, the impact of Europe on India, her awakening to it and to her own soul. And as all through the long process of Bengal's cultural fellowship there was the play of a spiritual force behind it, so now also a mighty spiritual force was in action—the force of the Upanishadic truths—in Raja Rammohan Roy, then the spiritual forces embodied in Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo ; and the spiritual vision of the pioneers in the fields of art, literature, education and politics. India's decline had cost her her independence ; her reawakening has regained it. But it is only a first step to her divinely-assigned stupendous task—to unite all humanity, all the world in a golden tie of oneness in the One. That is the larger fellowship to be achieved.

“The Indian mind”, says Sri Aurobindo, “is inherently spiritual, intuitive and psychic.” And the author rightly believes in History as a record of the evolutionary growth of the national soul. It is from this standpoint that his study of the Bengal of the ages has been made and faithfully presented in the book. But he finds, as does every student of History, India's historical literature, not exclusively Bengal's still far short of the mark. So in his Introduction to Part Two, the author, himself a devoted student of India's culture from his youth, makes an earnest and well-reasoned appeal to “competent and high-souled scholars all over the land to take up research work and discover the yet unexplored regional achievements. “Only thus can the lacunae in India's cultural history be filled up, at least as far as possible, and India's fuller image revealed to her children's view. And far above its high academic value, it would have a powerful cohesive force of her basic unity, her spiritual solidarity and her indissoluble integrality.

Happily, the book has come out at a time when the image of the Truth that is India has almost faded out of memory not only of the world outside but even on her own children. The author and the publishers deserve our thanks for this service to the nation.

T.M.

SANSKRIT-FRENCH

Œuvres poetiques de Nilakantha Dikshita (I). Texte, traduction et notes par Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat. Pub. Institut Français d'Indologie, Pondichery. P. 358.

This volume, entitled the Poetical Works of Nilakantha Dikshita begins with a very learned and critical introduction about the life and times of the Dikshita with the help of internal and external evidences. The works included are: *Kalividaṁbana*, *Sabhārāṅjana* and *Anyāpadeśa Satakas*, *Sivotkarṣamanjari*, *Candīrahasya*, *Raghuvirastava*, *Sāntivilāsa*, *Gurutattvamallikā*, *Vairagyaśataka* and the famous *Anandasāgarastava* on Goddess Minakshi of Madurai.

Grand-nephew of the famous Sri Appaiya Dikshita, Nilakantha was minister to Tirumal Naik, the king of Madurai, for nearly thirty years and was mainly responsible for the Sanskrit renaissance in the South. Disillusioned with court-life, he devoted his later days to the worship of the Lord and became a Sannyasin in the end.

His *Kalividaṁbana*, a derision on the decadent age, has earned high place in Sanskrit literature and established him as a superb satirist. His exposure of fake scholarship in courts, description of the methods of doctors etc. are true to life even today.

The devotional works included in this collection underline his disillusionment with the life of the world and turn to the claim of the Spirit.

The translations and notes are fluent and helpful. Occasionally, however, the Sanskrit idiom has been missed e.g. In verse 52 of *Sabhāranjangaśatakam*, *pati-karmasu* does not mean works of the husband but acts of love.

The printing is excellent and we do look forward to the next collection of Dikshitar's works with the notes and translation of M. Filliozat.

S. SHANKARANARAYANAN

"To live in the Eternal is also to live with the Eternal within us. Whosoever consciously inhabits his being, his conscious presence inhabits. God lives and moves and acts in us when we live and move and act in him."

—Sri Aurobindo



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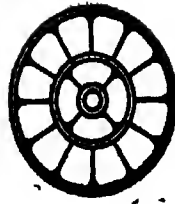
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The Advent



The Grace works for progress
in the path. The satisfaction of
desire may also serve that purpose
in showing the vanity of desire
and the good of yesterday may
no more be good tomorrow...

So follow your inspiration
and my blessings are
with you.

The ADVENT

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All evil is in travail of the
eternal good.

SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIAL

CONSCIOUSNESS

I SPOKE of consciousness and dimensions of consciousness. What then is consciousness itself? Well, we may begin by knowing what it is not, what is not consciousness. Not consciousness means the absence of consciousness, otherwise unconsciousness. You are conscious, conscious of things when you are aware, aware of their presence; when you are not aware, when you do not perceive, you are unconscious, you do not have consciousness. It is the difference between being asleep and being awake. When you are asleep things are lost, you become unconscious of them; when you are awake, things reappear and you are conscious of them. The difference is analogous to the difference of night and day. Night in its darkness swallows up things, annihilates them as it were, it is unconsciousness. The day dawning brings forth the things and gives their normal concrete form, tangible reality. It is consciousness. So we may say consciousness is light, and unconsciousness darkness. Consciousness is creation—unconsciousness annihilation.

But consciousness has two modes or statuses. First of all, when

consciousness is the consciousness of things, when one is conscious of the existence of objects, this mode may be called objective consciousness, but consciousness may exist in itself without reference to any object of consciousness; the light is there, there is no object to illumine, it is self-luminous. This is consciousness in its essence, its own reality.

This essential consciousness is an unchanging reality existing everywhere in the universe but it expresses itself in different modes and apparent forms, its essential quality does not change but acquires a different colour and vibration in accordance with its degree and level of expression. For example, the body has a consciousness, life-force has a consciousness, mind has a consciousness, and the levels above the mind, each has a consciousness. All these types or modes or, as I have said, dimensions, of consciousness are essentially the same consciousness. The vessels are different, their shape and colour differ but they all hold as it were the same transparent, clear water. We all know the different movements of light, seen and unseen; but however much they differ in their vibration, all have the same speed of light. And it is always the same composition, as scientists have taught us: a light particle is a fusion of an electron and a positron; even so consciousness is also an invariable entity.

Mother said of love the same thing as I have been saying of consciousness. She says, there is only one love, the divine love and none other. There are various expressions of that love according to the conditions in which it manifests to the degree or status of being but everywhere it is the same divine love behind in essence. Because of inadequate expression it becomes blurred or faint and muddy but the living fire is there below the ashes. You have simply to shake off the outer coating to allow the inner reality to shine forth in its own nature.

Love in the mind, love in the heart, love in the vital, love in the physical, love human and animal are not negations of the Divine love, it is not that you have to reject, cut off these so-called inferior formulations of love, these do not necessarily deny or reject the Divine love in their heart of hearts; even there in their true reality, glows the pure Divine love. To reach the Divine love, to enjoy its divine *ānanda*, it is not necessary to make a bonfire of these earthly goods and go

beyond into the transcendent. Even here in this earthly mould the Divine love in its full purity can be established for it is already there behind and needs only earnest evocation.

Consciousness essentially is always and everywhere the same. Its own quality is unvarying but in its expression there is growth and development, an increase in intensity and amplitude. The light that your candle gives and the light that comes from the sun are not different in quality but they differ in expression or manifestation, because of the receptacle, the seat or abode of the light. The Vedic fire was lighted on a sacred altar, that is the seat for the God from where to manifest himself. There was a regular ceremony for the preparation of the seat (Barhi) and the value and the success of the sacrifice depended largely on a proper preparation of the seat. The seat, the basic status also indicates that there is an ascending movement of the sacrifice. The sacrifice symbolises consciousness and radiant energy, mounting and travelling upward and forward; the progress or ascent of consciousness means bringing out its inherent potential strength that is behind and within and placing it in front as power of expression. As I have said, if consciousness in matter is like a light of single candle power, on the level of life it becomes a light of multiple candle power and in the mind this multiple power is again multiplied. In this way the consciousness finally attains its solar incandescence on the highest height of the being.

When we speak of the dimensions of the consciousness, it means these different levels or statuses of ascending expression. They also form according to the mode of expression each one a world of its own. We may compare the mounting consciousness to a growing tree, it is the same sap-substance that appears at the outset as a seed, then as the seed opens out and develops it appears or throws up a stem or trunk and as it proceeds it throws up branches and higher up leaves and then flowers and fruit. Apparently however different and diverse these formulations, they are but expressions of the same sap-substance in the original seed. Even so an original seed-consciousness is the basis and essential reality of all the forms in the material universe.

It must now be apparent that consciousness is not merely consciousness, simple awareness, it is also power or energy. The Vedic

word is *cit-tapas*, consciousness-energy. It is one indivisible entity: consciousness is energy. It is not however in the sense as when we say knowledge is power. It does not mean that consciousness *has* power or gives power, but consciousness *is* power. The nearer analogy would be with light-energy. Light, we know today, thanks to modern science, does not merely illumine, it energises, activates, moves things, that is to say, matter and material objects. The ray of light, we know now, acts even more effectively than the surgeon's knife. The inherent quality of light is energy. This energy has been discovered to be electro-magnetic energy, a photon (unit-light or light-unit) is, as we have said, an electro-magnetic quantum. In the same way consciousness is also a vibration of energy. It is the self-impulsion of consciousness. This impulsion need not always go out, cast or spread itself abroad in outward expressions and activities, it may be a stilled self-contained impulsion. It is awareness pregnant with power. Consciousness is luminosity, consciousness is energy, consciousness is also delight. It may be said the very soul of consciousness is a happiness, a gladness absolute and inviolate, the delight which is love in its supreme mode.

Indeed, in the final account, we come back to the supreme *mantra* formulating the mystery of ultimate reality given by the ancients that we all know and repeat so often—*saccidānanda*.

Such then is the ultimate Truth or Reality: there is the Being or pure Existence with its norms or modes or functions or self-formulations as Consciousness-Force and as Delight. This triune entity is absolutely one and the same. What exists, declares the Vedic Rishi, is one; it is called variously as Light and Infinity and Harmony and Delight.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

LETTERS OF SRI AUROBINDO

THERE need be no opposition between the Shiva idea and the concentration you are now beginning; the one should rather be taken as an aspect or form of the other. You have had a sound interpretation; follow it, concentrating on it so that all that it means may be brought quietly and steadily into your consciousness; as it descends and increases—for which first the consciousness must open more and more,—this part nature with its limitations and defects will either fall away or be taken and remoulded. A calm and quiet sadhana based on an increasing peace is the best,—if possible on peace and joy; aim at that. Do not allow the sense of past errors or present difficulties to trouble you overmuch; only recognise and steadily and progressively reject them—standing back from them with the idea, the faith that these things are not truly part of yourself, not at all your real self and must fall away. Concentrate more on the positive side.

*
**

I knew Satish Mukerji when he was organising the Bengal National College (1905-7), but afterwards I had no contact with him any longer. Even at that time we were not intimate and I knew nothing about his spiritual life or attainments—except that he was a disciple of Bejoy Goswami—as were also other political co-workers and leaders, like Bepin Pal and Manoranjan Guha. I knew Satish Mukherji only as a very able and active organiser in the field of education—a mission prophetically assigned to him, I was told, by his guru,—nothing more.

3.12.1932

*
**

I think onions can be described as rajaso-tamasic in their character. They are heavy and material and at the same (time) excitant

of certain strong material-vital forces. It is obvious that if one wants to conquer the physical passions and is still very much subject to the body nature and the things that affect it, free indulgence in onions is not advisable. It is only for those who have risen above the body consciousness and mastered it and are not affected by these things that it does not at all matter; for them the use of this or that food or its desire makes no difference. At the same time I must say that the abstinence from rajasic or tamasic foods does not of itself assure freedom from the things they help to stimulate. Vegetarians, for instance, can be as sensual and excitable as meat eaters; a man may abstain from onions and yet be in these respects no better than before. It is a change of consciousness that is effective and this kind of abstinence helps that only in so far as it tends to create a less heavy and more refined and plastic physical consciousness for the higher will to act upon. That is something, but it is not all; the change of consciousness can come even in spite of non-abstinence.

Onions are allowed here because the palate of the sadhaks demand something to give a taste to the food. We do not insist on these details, or make an absolutely strict rule, as the stress here is more on the inward change, the outward coming as its result. Only so much is insisted on as is essential for organisation and inner and outer discipline and to point the way to an indispensable self-control. It is pressed on all that the greed of the palate has to be conquered, but it has to be done in the last resort from within, as also the other passions and desires of the lower nature.

4.12.1932

*
**

Fitness for Yoga is a very relative term—the real fitness comes by the soul's call and a power to open oneself to the Divine. If you have that, you have the fitness, and your past actions cannot stand in the way: the past cannot bind the future. Of course you have to finish with it, reject it and turn into the new way—otherwise the past remains the present. But that is the question of the will in you and the soul's call. If you are faithful to your soul's call there is no reason why you

should not be able to do Yoga. All that you have to do is to keep your aspiration and not lose the inner connection that has been made—then the Mother's thought and the help will be with you and you will find your way.

The hearing of the bells has always been considered a sign or a premonition of the opening of the inner being to spiritual experience.

9-12-1932

*
**

Your letter came at a time when it was absolutely impossible for me to find a moment for reply, since from sometime before the 21st I have been kept pressingly occupied for almost the whole 24 hours. It is only today that I have a few minutes spare time. But whether we are able to write or not, you must never think that we have abandoned you. We have not left you out of our thoughts and the Mother's Grace and her affection will be always with you.

Do not let the difficulty you feel or meet from outside overcome or depress you. Keep this one thing in your mind that to come to the Divine is your spiritual destiny and since you have been here and been accepted by us that can be taken as the seal upon it. If that takes a little longer time than you could wish for it to materialise, this should not make you think of it otherwise—for these difficulties are external obstacles and incertitudes always come to the seeker. Neither the difficulties in yourself or the obstacles presented by life are as unsurmountable as they seem to your physical mind when they are pressing upon it. Remember also that although here the conditions would be more favourable, yet even at a distance the Grace and help can be there with you. Only fix yourself on the goal, make the inner choice once for all firmly and completely; it is there in your soul, fix it in your mind also. Once there, fixed and unalterable, it will prevail over the difficulties of your own vital nature and the physical world's opposition, misunderstanding or reluctance.

Always with you.

25-2-1933

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(It was 1 a.m. at night when my brother in excruciating pain called me and asked if Sri Aurobindo could heal him. I took out some prasad flowers that were with me and had them touched on the affected part. And lo! the pain vanished and he began to recover. I want to know if you were aware of this and heard my prayer.)

What happens in such cases is that when someone is accepted, the Mother sends out something of herself to him and this is with him wherever he goes and is always in connection with her being here. So when he does anything like what you did in this case with faith and bhakti, it reaches, through that emanation of herself which is with him, the Mother's consciousness inner or outer and the Force goes in return for the result.

*
**

(I had a magnificent and grand Darshan. But the centre of my head is always top-heavy. Why is it so?)

When there is a pressure of the Force on the Adhar to work on it or enter, this is often felt, especially if there is a working of the Force in the head. This heaviness disappears if the system receives and assimilates the Force and there is a free flow in the body—till then the pressure or some kind of heaviness is often felt at one centre or another where the Force is working.

*
**

(I was stunned to find that you had hardly touched the food I had sent you in offering. I am very sensitive and touchy and sentimental too, so I am very much moved and cannot find out with any stretch of imagination why you are so unsympathetic towards me)

Dont be absurd. Our sympathy towards you is profound and perfect but it cannot be measured by our sympathy towards your eatables. We usually just taste prasad sent to us; sometimes we take more, never when it is very sweet or very extra-ordinary. Of your vermicilli

we could speak in the language of the passionate address of the lover to his beloved "O sweet! O too too sweet!" (which does not mean that it was not well done), and the stew was extraordinary and of another world—so much so that if I tasted the first forkful with awe, the second was with awe, and I ventured no further into these unknown countries. By the way, I took much more of the vermicilli than I usually do of these concentrated payasas—so you are wrong in thinking I did not taste your prasad.

16-3-1934

*
**

Good heavens! but what! but which! but when! You expect me to give you *clear* and *concise* notes and all that, fixing the nature and salient features of each blessed thing? It would take me several Sundays wholly devoted to grappling with this tremendous task. And how the deuce am I to tell you in a clear and concise way what consciousness is or mind is or life is? Do you think these confounded entities are themselves clear and concise or have salient features? They are "salient" only in the Latin sense of jumping about all the time and becoming something different each moment. As for consciousness, you might just as well ask me to define the "world" in a few clear, concise and satisfactory words. Of course I could do it by replying "A damned mess" and that would be very satisfactory to me as well as clear and concise but it would hardly serve the purpose.

In the beginning of the sadhana you need nothing more than just what you say "concentration with faith, devotion and sincerity" on a form of the Divine Being—you can add prayer or the name, if you like.

Reading good books can be of help in the early mental stage—they prepare the mind, put it in the right atmosphere—can even if one is very sensitive bring some glimpses of realisation on the mental plane. Afterwards the utility diminishes—you have to find the...knowledge and experience in yourself.

20-3-1934

*
**

I have your letter of the 15th. It is certainly a great pity that you cannot shake off the bondage of these coarse and ignoble pleasures, for they pull the being down and prevent it from receiving the true Light and Ananda. But you will not improve matters by holding back from all sadhana. It is better to meditate daily for half an hour than not to do any sadhana at all. It gives more chance for you to receive the necessary call and force to break with the old habits and old life so as to take the plunge. Certainly we have not abandoned or forsaken you. And although it is not the fact that we are here only to uplift the fallen and not those who are on the Path—for then what use would be the path? —yet we are here for those who feel the call of the soul and, whatever their vital difficulties our help is there with them to make good the call. You have that call, although you still hesitate to do what is necessary to make it effective—but still we are with you and await the hour when you shall do so.

22-7-1934

*
**

I did not receive any letter from you so recently as a fortnight or three weeks ago. If you feel in a pitiable condition, it is certainly not because you have incurred our displeasure. I have said that we are always with you and it is true, but to feel it you must draw back from your vital and be able to concentrate in your inner being. If you do that faithfully and sincerely, after a time you will feel the connection and the rapport.

The meaning of the phrase you speak of is this, that usually the vital tries to resist the call to change. That is what is meant by revolt or opposition. If the inner will insists and forbids revolt or opposition, the vital unwillingness may often take the form of depression and dejection, accompanied by a resistance in the physical mind which supports the repetition of old ideas, habits, movements or actions while the body consciousness suffers from an apprehension or fear of the called for change, a drawing back from it or a dullness which does not receive the call.

It is these things you have to get rid of. But a sorrowful or des-

pondent mood is not the proper condition for doing that. You have to stand back from the feeling of suffering, anguish and apprehension, reject it and look quietly at the resistance, applying always to yourself your will to change and insisting that it shall be done and cannot fail to be done now or later with the divine help because the divine help is there. It is then that the strength can come to you that will overcome the difficulties.

Our blessings are with you.

18-11-1934

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**

It is quite sure that we are with you day and night; even if you do not yet see the Mother in your dreams or feel her presence, you should think of her as there and supporting you and that will surely help you.

If there is a natural movement of your mind to identify Shiva in the way you speak of and it jumps to myself and the Mother, why not let it take the jump? Perhaps it is not a jump but a natural transition, and reconciliation and not a conflict. Certainly your pranams are always accepted by us and always will be.

27-1-1935

*
**

It is not right once you have turned to the Divine, to allow despondency of any kind to take hold of you. Whatever the difficulties and troubles, you must keep this confidence that by relying on the Divine, the Divine will take you through. Now I answer the questions you put to me in your letter.

1. If to follow the spiritual path is your resolve, marriage and family life can only come across it. Marriage would be the right thing only if the sexual push was so strong that there was no hope of overcoming it except by a controlled and rational indulgence for sometime during which it could be slowly brought under subjection to the will.

But you say its hold on you is diminishing, so that does not seem indispensable.

2. As for leaving all and coming away from there that must be only when there is a clear and settled decision within you. To do so on an impulse would be to feel all the pull of old things after you come here and entail severe disturbance and struggle in the sadhana. When the other things fall away or are cut away from you then it can be done. Persist in your aspiration, insist on your vital to have faith and be more quiet. It will come.

29-10-1935

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As to the question of marriage in general, we do not consider it advisable for one who desires to come to the spiritual life. Marriage means usually any amount of trouble, heavy burdens, a bondage to the worldly life and great difficulties in the way of single-minded spiritual endeavour. Its only natural purpose would be, if the sexual trend was impossible to conquer, to give it a restricted and controlled satisfaction. I do not see in what way it could help you to keep the mind under control and subjugation; restless mind can only be quieted from within.

About your concentration, if you are accustomed to do it between the eye brows and find it helpful, you can continue that ordinarily, but try from time to time the concentration in the heart centre (middle of the chest) and see if it succeeds with you.

31-12-1935

(Compiled from the file of Sri Arabinda Bose)

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM:

THE FUTURE (CONTINUED)

THE HINDU SABHA

AN indication of the immense changes which are coming over our country, is the sudden leaping into being of new movements and organisations which are, by their very existence, evidence of revolutions in public feeling and omens of the future. The dead bones live indeed and the long sleep of the ages is broken. The Moslem League was indicative of much, the Hindu Sabha is indicative of yet more. The Nationlist party, while in entire disagreement with the immediate objects and spirit of the league, welcomed its birth as a sign of renovated political life in the Mahomedan community. But the Mahomedan community was always coherent, united and separately self-conscious. The strength of Islam lay in its unity and cohesion, the fruit of long discipline in equality and brotherhood, the strength of the Hindu in flexibility, progressiveness, elasticity, a divination of necessary changes, broad ideas, growing aspirations, the fruit of a long discipline in intellectual and moral sensitiveness. The Moslem League meant that the Mahomedan was awaking to the need of change, the growth of aspiration in the world around him,—not yet to the broad idea modern life demanded. The Hindu Sabha means that the Hindu is awakening to the need of unity and cohesion.

Does it mean more? Does it indicate a larger statesmanship, quicker impulse to action, a greater capacity for the unity and cohesion it seeks? Is the Hindu Sabha a novel body, with the power in it to effect great objects never before accomplished, the effective union of all shades of Hindu opinion from the lax Anglicised Agnostic, Hindu in nothing but birth and blood, to the intense and narrow worshipper of the institutes of Raghunandan? Or is it merely an ineffectual aspiration, like the old Congress, capable of creating a general sympathy and oneness of aim, but not of practical purpose and effec-

tive organisation? There are only two things strong enough to unite Hinduism, a new spiritual impulse based on Vedanta, the essential oneness of man, the transience and utilitarian character of institutions, the lofty ideals of brotherhood, freedom, equality, and recognition of the great mission and mighty future of the Hindus' spiritual ideas and discipline and of the Indian race,—or else a political impulse strong enough to unite Hindus together for the preservation and advancement of their community. The Hindu Sabha could not have come into being but for the great national movement which awakened the national spirit, the sense of past greatness, the divination of a mighty future, transforming the whole spirit and character of the educated community. But we fear that in its immediate inception and work it leans for its hope of success on a lower and less powerful motive—rivalry with Mahomedan pretensions and a desire to put the mass and force of an united Hinduism against the intensity of a Mahomedan self-assertion supported by official patronage and Anglo-Indian favour. Alarm and resentment at the pro-Mahomedan policy underlying the Reform Scheme and dissatisfaction with the Bombay conventionists for their suicidal support of the Government policy entered largely into the universal support given by Punjab Hindus to the new body and its great initial success. Mortification at the success of Mahomedan in securing Anglo-Indian sympathy and favour and the exclusion of Hindu from those blissful privileges figured largely in the speech of Sir Pratul Chandra Chatterjee who was held as the natural leader of Punjab Hinduism. These are not good omens. It is not by rivalry for Anglo-Indian favour, it is not by quarrelling for the loaves and fishes of British administration that Hinduism can rise into an united and effective force. If the Hindu Sabha takes its anchor on these petty aspirations or, if it founds any part of its strength on political emulation with the Mahomedans, it will be impossible for the Nationalist party to join in a movement which would otherwise have their full sympathy and eager support.

Lala Lajpat Rai struck a higher note, that of Hindu nationalism as a necessary preliminary to a greater Indian Nationality. We distrust this ideal. Not that we are blind to facts—not that we do not recognise Hindu-Mahomedan rivalry as a legacy of the past enhanced and not diminished by British ascendancy, a thing that has to be faced

and worked out either by mutual concession or by a struggle between nationalism and separatism. But we do not understand Hindu Nationalism as a possibility under modern conditions. Hindu nationalism had a meaning in the times of Shivaji and Ramdas, when the object of national revival was to overthrow a Mahomedan domination which, once tending to Indian unity and toleration, had become oppressive and disruptive. It was possible because India was then a world to itself and the existence of two geographical units entirely Hindu, Maharashtra and Rajputana provided it with a basis. It was necessary because the misuse of their domination by the Mahomedan element was fatal to India's future and had to be punished and corrected by the resurgence and domination of the Hindu. And because it was possible and necessary, it came into being. But under modern conditions India can only exist as a whole. A nation depends for its existence on geographical separateness and geographical compactness, on having a distinct and separate country. The existence of this geographical separateness is sure in the end to bear down all differences of race, language, religion, history. It has done so in Great Britain, in Switzerland, in Germany. It will do so in India. But geographical compactness is also necessary. In other words, the *des* or country must be so compact that mutual communication and the organisation of a central government becomes easy or, at least, not prohibitively difficult. The absence of such compactness is the reason why great empires are sure in the end to fall to pieces; they cannot get the support of that immortal and indestructible national self which can alone ensure permanence. This difficulty stands in the way of British Imperial Federation and is so great that any temporary success of that spacious aspiration will surely result in the speedy disruption of the empire. In addition, there must be an united force strong enough to take advantage of the geographical compactness and separateness,—either a wise and skilfully organised government with a persistent tradition of beneficence, impartiality and oneness with the nation or else a living national sense insisting on its separate inviolability and self-realisation. The secret of Roman success was in the organisation of such a Government; even so, it failed, for want of geographical compactness, to create a world-wide Roman nationality. The failure of the British rule to root itself lies in its inability to

become one with the nation either by the effacement of our national individuality or by the renunciation of its own separate pride and self-interest. These things are therefore necessary to Indian nationality, geographical separateness, geographical compactness and a living national spirit. The first was always ours and made India a people apart from the earliest times. The second we have attained by British rule. The third has just sprung into existence.

But the country, the Swadesh which must be the base and fundamental of our nationality, is India, a country where Mahomedan and Hindu live intermingled and side by side. What geographical base can a Hindu nationality possess? Maharastra and Rajasthan are no longer separate geographical units but merely provincial divisions of a single country. The very first requisite of a Hindu nationalism is wanting. The Mahomedans base their separateness and their refusal to regard themselves as Indian first and Mahomedans afterwards on the existence of great Mahomedan nations to which they feel themselves more akin, in spite of our common birth and blood, than to us. Hindus have no such resource. For good or evil, they are bound to the soil and to the soil alone. They cannot deny their Mother, neither can they mutilate her. Our ideal is therefore Indian Nationalism, largely Hindu in its spirit and traditions, because the Hindu made the land and the people and persists, by the greatness of his past, his civilisation and his culture and his invincible virility, in holding it, but wide enough also to include the Muslim and his culture and traditions and absorb them into itself. It is possible that the Mahomedan may not recognize the inevitable future and may prefer to throw himself into the opposite scale. If so, the Hindu, with what little Mahomedan help he may get, must win Swaraj both for himself and the Mahomedan in spite of that resistance. There is a sufficient force and manhood in us to do a greater and more difficult task than that, but we lack unity, brotherhood, intensity of single action among ourselves. It is to the creation of that unity, brotherhood and intensity that the Hindu Sabha should direct its whole efforts. Otherwise we must reject it as a disruptive and not a creative agency.

NATIONAL EDUCATION

From the beginning of the national movement, in spite of its enthusiasm, force, innate greatness, a defect has made itself apparent, a fatality of insufficient effectiveness has pursued it, which showed that there was a serious flaw somewhere in this brilliant opening of a new era.... The nature of that flaw has been made manifest by the period of trial in which, for a time, the real force which made for success has been temporarily withdrawn, so that the weaknesses still inherent in the nation might be discovered and removed. The great flaw was the attempt to combine the new with the old, to subject the conduct of the resurgence of India to the aged, the cautious, the hesitating, men out of sympathy with the spirit of the new age, unable to grasp the needs of the future, afraid to apply the bold and radical methods which could alone transform the nation, sweep out the rottenness in our former corrupt nature and, by purifying Bengal, purify India. It is now apparent that it was the Nationalist element which by its energy, courage, boldness of thought, readiness to accept the conditions of progress, gave the movement its force and vitality. Wherever that force has been withdrawn, the movement has collapsed. The older men have shown themselves utterly unable either to supply the moral force that would sustain the forward march of the nation or the brain-power to grapple with national problems. In swadeshi the force of sentiment supplied, and the persistence of the great mass of silent nationalism in resisting any attempt to draw back from boycott has preserved the movement to prefer indigenous and boycott foreign goods, but the withdrawal of active Nationalist endeavour has resulted in the stoppage of progress. Swadeshi maintains itself, it no longer advances. National education languishes because the active force has been withdrawn from it, it does not absolutely perish because a certain amount of Nationalist self-devotion has entrenched itself in this last stronghold and holds it against great odds under the most discouraging circumstances. A certain amount only,—because part of the active enthusiasm and self-sacrifice which created the movement, has been deliberately extruded from it in obedience to fear or even baser motives, part has abandoned it in disgust at the degeneration of the system in incapable hands and the

best is now finding its self-devotion baffled and deprived of the chance of success by the same incapacity and weakness at headquarters.

The National Council of Education, as it is at present composed has convicted itself of entire incapacity whether to grasp the meaning of the movement or to preserve or to create the conditions of its success. To the majority of the members it is merely an interesting academical experiment in which they can embody some of their pet hobbies or satisfy a general vague dissatisfaction with the established University system. To others the only valuable part of it is the technical instruction given in its workshops. The two or three who at all regard it as part of a great national movement, are unnerved by fear, scepticism and distrust and, by introducing the principle of Chanakya into its public policy, are depriving it of the first condition of its continued existence. It is folly to expect that the nation at large will either pay heavily or make great sacrifices merely to support an interesting academic experiment still less to allow a few learned men to spoil the intellectual development of the race by indulging their hobbies at the public expense. That the people will not support a mere technical education divorced from that general humanistic training which is essential to national culture, has been sufficiently proved by the failure of Mr. Palit's Technical College to command adequate financial support. Unless this movement is carried on, as it was undertaken, as part of a great movement of national resurgence, unless it is made, visibly to all, a nursery of patriotism and a mighty instrument of national culture, it cannot succeed. It is foolish to expect men to make great sacrifices while discouraging their hope and enthusiasm. It is not intellectual recognition of duty that compels sustained self-sacrifice in masses of men; it is hope, it is the lofty ardour of a great cause, it is the enthusiasm of a noble and courageous effort. It is amazing that men calling themselves educated and presuming to dabble with public movements should be blind to the fact that the success or failure of National Education is intimately bound up with and, indeed, entirely depends upon the fortune of the great resurgence which gave it birth. They seem to labour under the delusion that it was an academical and not a national impulse which induced men to support this great effort, and they seek to save the institution from a premature death by exiling

from it that enthusiasm that made it possible. They cannot ignore the service done by that enthusiasm, but they regard it merely as the ladder by which they climbed and are busy trying to kick it down. They are really shutting off the steam, yet expect the locomotive to go on.

The successful organisation of the Bengal National College in Calcutta was the work of its able and enthusiastic Superintendent aided by a body of young and self-sacrificing workers. The National Council which nominally controlled, in reality only hampered it; all that the Council contributed to the system, was its defects. The schools of the Mofussil were created by the enthusiasm of the Nationalist party, the propaganda of its leaders and the ardent self-devotion of little bands of workers who gave their self-sacrifice and enthusiasm to lay the foundations. The Nationalist Council never lifted a single finger to help the Mofussil schools, beyond doling out unsubstantial grants to maintain them merely as necessary feeders of the Calcutta institution. But unless a movement of this kind is supported by wise organisation and energetic propagandism emanating from an active central authority, it must soon sink under the weight of unsolved problems, unsurmounted difficulties and un-amended defects. The curriculum of the Council is extraordinarily elaborate and expensive, and involves a great outlay for the formation of library, laboratory, and workshops, and, arranged as it is on the vicious Western system of driving many subjects at a time into the growing intellect, is slow, cumbrous, a strain on the mind of the students, wasteful of time, impossible without an unusual number of good teachers. The financial problem created is one of crushing difficulty, yet the Council think they have done their duty when they have created the problem and do not seem even to dream that there is any call on them to solve it. Even for the Calcutta College in whose maintenance they are more keenly interested, they can only make feeble and spasmodic efforts when, as annually happens, there is a deficit in the budget. The academical problem of teaching so many subjects in so short a time without outdoing the exploits of the Calcutta University as a brain-killing and life-shortening machine, does not seem to occur to these lofty and secluded minds. They are content with creating the problem and maintaining it by their system

of examinations. Even if funds were forthcoming, there would still be the necessity of providing a regular and plentiful supply of teachers trained in an entirely new system of instruction. This urgent problem the Council has systematically ignored, and not even the elementary steps of establishing a Teacher's Training Class in Calcutta and issuing a series of suitable books in the vernacular has been attempted. The only problems which the Council seems willing to grapple with are, first, the problem of supporting National Education without incurring the wrath of the officials and, secondly, the problem of evading the spirit of the clause which forbids it to subject itself to any form of Government control, while observing the letter so as to prevent the invalidation of its endowments.

But if the National Council is content to fail in its duty, the country cannot be content to allow this great educational enterprise to perish. We do not know how or by whom the Council is elected. It seems to have followed the example of so many bodies in India which have started as democratic institution and ended as close corporations self-electing and self-elected. But if it is impossible to alter the component character of this body and put into it keener blood and clearer brains, some other centre of effort must be created which will undertake to grapple with problems of National Education, the supply of trained and self-devoted teachers and of books which will guide them in the imparting of knowledge on new lines, the awakening of interest, hope and enthusiasm in the country, the provision of necessary funds to the Mofussil schools, the forcing of the Council by the pressure of public opinion of a more rational and a more national system of teaching. But the first condition of success is the reawakening of the national movement all along the line, and this can only be done by the organisation and resolute activity of the Nationalist party.

SOCIAL REFORM AND POLITICS

There are two methods of progress, two impelling motives from which great changes and far-reaching reforms can be effected. One is the struggle of self-interests between man and man, class and class, working out progress by ignoble strife, the forced compromise and convenient barter of the lower kind of politics. The other is the impulse

and clash of mighty ideas, noble aspirations, great national and humanitarian aims, the things which inspire mankind in its upward march and create empires and nations. Both are freely used by the Master of the world in His careful providence and various economy. Often they are intermingled. But it cannot be doubted which is most healthful to the individual, the nation and the race. The social result worked out by a bitter and selfish struggle between upper class and lower class, Labour and Capital, is one thing; the harmony created by a mighty enthusiasm, such as led the aristocracy of Japan to lay down their exclusive privileges and, without reserve, call upon the masses to come up and share their high culture, their seats of might and their ennobling traditions, is quite another. Hindu society in the mofussil is now bitterly divided, and tends more and more to be convulsed, by the new aspirations of the lower castes and the inability of the higher to decide how they will meet the demand. It is a bad sign that the action of both sides tends more and more to be selfish and narrow, political in the worst sense of the world. To barter help in Swadeshi or faithfulness to Hinduism for social privileges, or to bribe the masses to Swadeshim by petty and calculated concessions will tend neither to the genuineness of the Swadeshi sentiment, nor the strength of the national movement, nor the dignity and purity of our religion. It is an evil and foreign principle which has entered into our system, one of the many evil results of our disastrous contact with European civilisation at a time of national weakness and disintegration and our attempt to assimilate it without first vindicating our inner liberty and establishing ourselves as free agents. A great social revolution in this ancient society ought only to come as the fruit of a mighty national, humanitarian and religious impulse. The fault of the present state of things rests largely with the waning insight and statesmanship of the Brahmins. Formerly they would not have been wanting either in concerted action, largeness of view or skilfulness of device. It was not their wont to stand still in an inert and impossible conservatism but to recognise circumstances and meet them without sacrificing the essence of their religion or the basic principles of Hindu society.

STUDENTS AND POLITICS

All India and specially Bengal owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Hassan Imam for his strong manly and sensible remarks on the vexed question of students and politics as President of the Beharee Students Conference at Gaya. Contrast this honest utterance and robust recognition of unalterable facts with the fencings, refinements and unreal distinctions of Mr. Gohhale's utterance. The difference is between a man with an eye and a clear practical sense and a mere intellectual, a man of books and words and borrowed thoughts, proud of his gift of speech and subtlety of logic, but unable to penetrate a fact even when he sees it. With Mr. Hassan Imam a strong personal force enters the field of politics.

SRI AUROBINDO

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

XVI

The soul's cry, like the roar of a dark cloud,
 fell upon the triple altars: (1)
The terrible Adversary heard it and fled (2)
 with all his cohort.
The Conscient Being like a mad elephant
 rushed out
And in his thirst began churning the high heavens. (3)
The twin chains—virtue and sin—he tore off
 and uprooted the pegs:
He reached the top heaven and entered into Nirvana.
He is drunk with the supreme Wine, oblivious of
 all the three worlds.
Master of the five agents, none is against. (4)
Burning with the hot rays of the sun (5)
 he dives into the heavenly Ganga. (6)
Mahinda says, "Yes, I entered here and lost sight of all else."

NOTES:-

- (1) triple—mind, life, body.
- (2) Adversary-Maya.
- (3) heavens—the mind—churning in order to go through.
- (4) Bhutas; elements or indriyas (senses).
- (5) Sun of the Truth Consciousness.
- (6) Ganga=Supreme Delight.

XVII

The sun is the gourd-shell,
 the moon is the string tied to it;
The heart's silence is the rod,
 and the ascetic woman does the rest.

O my mate, Heruka is playing on the Veena;
 The Voice with its stringed melody
 flashes forth the compassion
 Vowels and consonants form the twin rows of cadence,
 The bridge, elephant-shaped, marks the equal enjoying.
 As the fingers press tight upon the palm,
 All the twenty two notes ring out and spread everywhere:
 The Deity dances, the Goddess sings,
 the Buddha play is played out.

NOTES:

Dried gourd is used as the base or hub of the instrument.

Sun is the Supreme Knowledge, moon is the Supreme Delight.

The creation is a stringed musical instrument. Knowledge is its base, the delight is the row of strings tied to the base, the inner silence is the body (rod) on which the strings are laid. The woman is the inspiration of the inner soul, creating the music, she is the mate of the singer, the poet himself. What kind of music is it? It is the music of the Void pouring out the light of compassion all over the creation. The strings are in two layers, the vowels (beginning with *a*—alpha series) are the top series, the consonants the series below (Indian *K* series, European *beta* series). That marks the echoing and the re-echoing of the melody, also the right hand and the left hand movements of the consciousness (Knowledge and Power) according to the occultists—it means the total encircling consciousness, the global music. The bridge tightens and maintains the poise of the strings. We may remember here the two subtle nervous lines of 'Ida' and 'Pingala' and the middle one, 'Sushumna' that balances the two. The psychological sense is that the dualities of the world-experience are resolved in the consciousness of the sadhak by a supreme sense of equality. The elephant may mean the strength of physical resolution. The fingers pressing indicate the same thing, the pressure of almost physical consciousness to bring out the vast music that is Nirvana. The Gods and Goddesses are all happy for the curtain is rung down on the play, it is the end—Nirvana.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

THE HUMAN ASPIRATION OF A DIVINE LIFE HERE UPON EARTH & THE CONCEPTION OF INTEGRAL SPIRITUAL ABSOLUTISM OF SRI AUROBINDO

SRI Aurobindo is one of the greatest mystico-philosophers of the present age. He has propounded a philosophy of Integral Spiritual Absolutism in his magnum opus 'The Life Divine' which reconciles the two opposite general philosophical tendencies, viz., the Asceticism of the East and the Materialism of the West. And, he has given us a method of Integral Yoga or Purna Yoga through which one can realise the Self or Brahman and have a *Brahmanic-life or Divine Life here upon Earth*. In this paper we are interested to see how the human aspiration of a *divine life here upon earth* made Sri Aurobindo reject the conception of Asceticism of the East, on the one hand, and the conception of Materialism, on the other, and to propound a conception of, what we call, 'Integral Spiritual Absolutism' based on the standpoint of Supermind, or, as the Upanishads speak, of 'All is Brahman.'

Sri Aurobindo starts in 'The Life Divine' with the perception and the justification of the fundamental and the constant human aspiration of a *divine life here upon earth*, namely, "to know, possess and be the divine being in an animal and egoistic consciousness, to convert our twilit or obscure physical mentality into the plenary supramental illumination, to build peace and a self-existent bliss where there is only a stress of transitory satisfactions besieged by physical pain and emotional suffering, to establish an infinite freedom in a world which presents itself as a group of mechanical necessities, to discover and realise the immortal life in a body subjected to death and constant mutation."¹ This constant human aspiration has been, he points out, the earliest preoccupation of man in his awakened thought, and, since it survives the longest periods of scepticism and returns back, it also seems to be the inevitable and ultimate preoccupation of him. Even today, he tells us, the humanity is not satisfied by the victorious analysis of the externalities of Nature;

¹ *The Life Divine*, Vol. I, p. 2 (Sri Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry 1955).

it is preparing itself to return to its primeval longings, viz., 'God, Light, Freedom, Immortality.'

These persistent ideals, however, appear as contrary to our ordinary material intellect and to our normal experience. But Sri Aurobindo advises us to look at them from a 'more deliberate view of the world's working.' For, we shall, then, find them to be the affirmation of higher and deeper experiences, which, though abnormal, can be attained by a revolutionary individual effort or by an evolutionary general progression.

As a matter of fact, this direct opposition between these persistent ideals of human race and our normal experience, points out Sri Aurobindo, is a "part of Nature's profoundest method and the sense of her completest sanction."¹ For, all problems of Existence, he says, are essentially problems of harmony; because essentially the Nature, whether Material, Vital or Mental, seeks a harmony. If we look at the Nature we find that it has already solved one such problem, viz., the 'accordance of active Life with a material of form, in which the condition of activity itself seems to be inertia'; and it is seeking to solve it better with greater complexity, because the perfect solution of this problem consists in the attainment of 'the material immortality of a fully organised mind-supporting animal body.' In the solution of the other problem of opposites, viz., 'the accordance of conscious mind and conscious will with a form and a life in themselves not overtly self-conscious and capable at best of a mechanical or sub-conscious will', it has already produced astonishing results and it aims at higher marvels. For, the ultimate solution of this problem of opposite consists in the attainment of 'an animal consciousness no longer seeking but possessed of Truth, and Light, with the practical omnipotence, which would result from the possession of a direct and perfected knowledge.'

Looking thus at the working of Nature, we shall find, says Sri Aurobindo, that the fundamental and the constant upward impulse of man for a *divine life here upon earth* is not only "rational in itself, but it is the only logical completion of a rule and an effort that seems to be a fundamental method of Nature and the very sense of her universal strivings."²

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Justifying further the human aspiration for a *divine life here upon earth*, Sri Aurobindo says that to speak of evolution of Life in Matter, and of evolution of Mind in Life is nothing but a mere narration of the phenomenon of evolution; it can become an explanation of it only when "we accept the Vedantic solution that Life is already involved in Matter, and Mind in Life because in essence Matter is a form of veiled-life, Life a form of veiled Consciousness."¹ And, if we accept the Vedantic solution, there will be little objection to admit further that the mental consciousness may itself be only a form and a veil of higher spiritual states beyond Mind. The human aspiration for a *divine life upon earth* would, then, present itself "as simply the imperative impulse by which Nature is seeking to evolve beyond Mind, and appears to be as natural, true and just as the impulse towards life, which she has planted in certain forms of Matter, or, the impulse towards Mind, which she has planted in certain forms of Life."²

Arguing further, Sri Aurobindo says that if evolution is nothing but the 'progressive manifestation of Nature of that which had slept or worked in her involved', then, it is also the 'overt realisation of that which she secretly is'. In that case, we can neither stop the Nature at a given stage of her evolution, nor have we the right to condemn any of her intention 'to go beyond. As a matter of fact, once we accept that Spirit is involved in Matter and apparent Nature is secret God, then, the manifestation of the Divine in himself, and the realisation of God within and without are the "highest and most legitimate aims possible to man upon earth."³

This perennial aspiration of man to possess a *divine life upon earth*, says Sri Aurobindo, is justified by the 'deliberate reason' as well as 'intuition of mankind'. Often has this aspiration been doubted by logical thought, and often have attempts been made to persuade the humanity to limit their mental activities to the practical and immediate problems of their material existence in the universe. Yet, with every such evasion, mankind has returned to it "with a more vehement impulse of inquiry or a more violent hunger for an

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

immediate solution".¹ It is this hunger, says he, which has profited mysticism, and on account of which "new religions arise to replace the old that have been destroyed by a scepticism which itself could not satisfy, because, although its business was inquiry, it was unwilling sufficiently to inquire".²

Sri Aurobindo, therefore, strongly rejects those attempts which deny or stifle the truth of the immortal upward aspiration of man for a *divine life upon earth*. He says that to speak of this truth as 'yet obscure in its outward workings' or to speak of it as 'represented by obscurantist Superstition or a crude faith' is, in itself, "a kind of obscurantism".³ For, this aspiration is a 'cosmic necessity', and therefore, the will to escape from a cosmic necessity, because it is arduous, difficult to justify by immediate tangible results, and slow in regulating its operation, is nothing but "a revolt against the secret, mightier will of the great Mother".⁴ It would, therefore, be more rational "to accept what she will not allow us as a race to reject, and lift it from the sphere of blind instinct, obscure intuition and random aspiration into the light of reason and an instructed and consciously self-building will".⁵ As a matter of fact, if there is any higher truth beyond Mind, we need not fear to aspire for it, because it is very likely that it may constitute our next higher state of consciousness.

But all our attempts at the perception and justification of the constant human aspiration for a *divine life upon earth* can have no base unless we are able to say, with the Upanishads, says Sri Aurobindo, that "Matter also is Brahman"⁶, and unless also we are able to recognise a series of ascending terms, viz., Life, Mind and Supermind, and the grades that link Mind to Supermind, viz., Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition, and Overmind, between Matter and Brahman. For, without the former, the human aspiration for a *divine life upon earth* remains always an imagination and an unreality; and, without the latter, the identification between Brahman or Spirit and Matter remains always an artificial creation of Thought.

Ibid., p. 5.

Ibid., p. 5.

Ibid., p. 6.

Ibid., p. 6.

Ibid., p. 6.

Ibid., p. 8.

In fact, without recognising the identity of Spirit and Matter, and without recognising a series of ascending terms between them, there is always a choice for Thought to accept Matter as the only reality and to deny Spirit as "an illusion of the imagination", or to accept Spirit as alone the reality and to deny Matter as "an illusion of the senses". While the former has always been the view of the Materialists, the latter has always been the view of the Ascetics or static-Spiritualists, viz., the Vedantic Monists. Since the materialist denies the Spirit and the ascetic denies the Matter, Sri Aurobindo calls these two denials "The Materialist's Denial", and "The Refusal of the Ascetic" respectively.

These two denials have sought to assert themselves as the sole truth, and have dominated the conception of life in Europe and in India respectively. Consequently, in India, while there has been a great heaping up of the treasures of the Spirit or at least of some of them, there has also been a great bankruptcy of Life; and in Europe, while there has been the fullness of riches and the triumphant mastery of the world's powers and possessions, there has also been an equal bankruptcy in the things of the Spirit.

The mind of the human being, however, cannot rest satisfied in these barren contradictions. To attain a *divine life upon earth* being a constant human aspiration, it must seek a "luminous reconciliation" between Spirit and Matter by recognising the degrees between Mind and Spirit.

No doubt, like the materialists and the ascetics, the Vitalists and Mentalists also claim the reality of Life and of Mind respectively; and may, therefore, reduce all things into the terms of Life or Life-Energy and of Mind or Mental-Ideas. But it should be noted that they "may satisfy for a time the logical reason, which deals only with pure ideas, but they cannot satisfy the mind's sense of actuality".¹ As philosophical imaginations of the human-mind, they suffer from an air of unreality in the actual or practical sense. Materialism and Asceticism can give us a sense of actuality for some time i.e., till our minds come to the perception of the 'whole' or the 'integral Truth' namely the Spiritual Unity or the Integral Spiritual Absolute

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

embracing within it both the truths of Asceticism and Materialism. Similarly, it is this spiritual unity or Integral Spiritual Absolute, which will also automatically embrace within it the claims of Vitalism and Mentalism; because, Vitalism and Mentalism occupy intermediate positions between Asceticism, on the one hand, and Materialism, on the other.

What is, therefore, needed is to seek a 'luminous reconciliation' between Materialism and Asceticism, i.e., a reconciliation between Spirit and Matter. Before attempting it, Sri Aurobindo, however, likes to test each of these two opposite theories of Existence and of Life separately in order to appreciate the relative and genuine services which these have rendered to the humanity with respect to its constant aspiration for a *divine life upon earth*.

The great service rendered by Materialism consists in training the intellect to function as a 'clear, pure and disciplined' instrument of knowledge, which is indispensable for a safe entrance into the spiritual field. For, in the absence of intellectual clarity, the intuitive or the spiritual faculties, which are being missioned to work in a physical body, are exposed to a mixed functioning along with the emotional desires and nervous impulses, and are, therefore, in danger of bringing 'illuminating confusion rather than clarified truth'. As a matter of fact, when the spiritual knowledge is seized on by unripe minds, as it actually happened in the past, the real nucleus of truth is encrusted with such an accretion of perverting superstition and irrationalising dogmas that all advance in true knowledge is rendered impossible. This mixed functioning is especially dangerous when men, who have unchastened minds and unpurified sensibilities, attempt to rise in the spiritual field. For, in their attempt to rise, they first enter into the domains of subliminal regions, which are regions of Knowledge-cum-Ignorance or Light-cum-Darkness. Instead of enlightening, these regions sometimes blind the travellers on the spiritual path. A 'clear, pure and disciplined intellect', therefore, is indispensable on the spiritual path to put a check upon the emotional aspect of human personality.

Besides, Sri Aurobindo has due respect for Atheism for the work it has done for the Divine, and admires the services that Agnosticism has rendered in preparing the 'illimitable increase of knowledge'.

He says that since the very soul of Materialism is the search for Knowledge, it will be wrong to cry a halt to it even at the barriers of sense-knowledge and of the reasoning from sense-knowledge; for its very urge for knowledge will carry it beyond the sense-knowledge and reasoning which arise from sense-knowledge. As a matter of fact, Sri Aurobindo is of the opinion that such an advance was already present in the 'obscure beginnings' of Materialism. The drive of Science towards "a Monism which is consistent with multiplicity" is significant in being similar "towards the vedic idea of one essence with its many becomings".¹ When the dividing ignorance of Mind will be cured, Materialism will realise that it is not Matter or Material Energy which is the mother of Life and Mind, but that Matter, Life and Mind are one Energy triply formulated, and that this Energy, which creates the world, is nothing but a Will, which is a consciousness applying itself to a work and a result, i.e., a self-involution of consciousness in form and a self-evolution out of form, so as to actualise some mighty possibility in the universe it has created. And, in Man, it will also realise, that this Will is nothing else but a Will to 'unending Life, to unbounded Knowledge, to unfettered Power'. We find that Science today has begun to dream of the 'physical conquest of death'. This is only an expression of an insatiable thirst for knowledge, which is trying to work out something like a 'terrestrial omnipotence for humanity'. For Science the idea of 'limit' or of 'impossible' has begun to grow a little shadowy; and it has begun to believe that whatever man constantly wills he must, in the end, be able to realise it, because the consciousness in the race will eventually find the means for realizing it.

Not only in its theoretical aspect, but in its practical aspect too, the achievements of Science are very significant. Sri Aurobindo mentions the example of 'Wireless telegraphy', where the sensible physical means for the intermediate transmission of the physical force have been removed, and they are preserved only at the points of impulsion and reception. Eventually, with the study of the laws and forces of the supraphysical, these means of intermediate transmission of the physical force, believes Sri Aurobindo, may also dis-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

appear, and Mind of man may be able to seize directly the physical energy and speak accurately its errand.

Yet, even with the attainment of the full knowledge and control upon the worlds immediately above Matter, Materialism, says Sri Aurobindo, can never get the knowledge of the spiritual field. For the knowledge of the spiritual field can never be had with the senses. The spiritual field can only be entered into with the help of the intuitive or the spiritual faculty of knowing. Therefore, Materialism will always remain limited by regarding Matter as the sole reality, and Spirit as an illusion of human imagination. Denying the existence of the Spirit, Materialism will for ever deny the possibility of a *divine life on this earth*. Not only so, with its extreme conclusion that Matter alone is real, we arrive, says Sri Aurobindo, "at an insignificance and unreality in the life of the individual and the race, which leaves us, logically, the option between either a feverish effort of the individual to snatch what he may from a transient existence, to 'live his life', as it is said, or a dispassionate and objectless service of the race and the individual, knowing well that the latter is a transient fiction of the nervous mentality and the formerly only a little more long-lived collective form of the same regular nervous spasm of Matter."¹ Materialism deceives us either with a brief delusion of life or with the nobler delusion of an altruistic ethical aim and a mental consummation. Like spiritual Monism, it thus arrives "at a Maya, that is and yet is not,—is, for it is present and compelling, is not, for it is phenomenal and transitory in its works".²

Now, to examine the theory of Asceticism. It is to be noted that by Ascetics, Sri Aurobindo understands the Vedantic Monists or the Adwaitins. Even among them, he only mentions the name of Shankaracharya, after whom the philosophy of Advaita-Vedanta has become famous. Whether Shankaracharya subscribes to the view of Asceticism, and if so, in what sense is a question, which we shall see in some other paper. For the present, we are simply interested in knowing how Sri Aurobindo rejects the philosophy of Asceticism and how after rejecting this philosophy and the philosophy of Materialism, he propounds a philosophy of Integral Spiritual Absolutism

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

in order to conceive the possibility of the fulfilment of the constant aspiration of the humanity for a *divine life upon earth*.

Sri Aurobindo says that the Ascetics or the Adwaitins ascended to the state of inactive and contentless Self directly, i.e., without passing through the cosmic-consciousness. Since the consciousness of the state of inactive and contentless Self transcends the consciousness of the world, they declared that the Nirguna or the inactive and contentless Self alone is real, and that the world is either an illusion or a qualified illusion, i.e., either unreal or unreal-real. While he does not mention any name of an advaitic philosopher who holds the view of complete illusionism,¹ he attaches the view of qualified-illusionism with the name of Shankaracharya. Declaring the world to be an unreality or real-unreality, the Ascetics or the Adwaitins suggest that 'renunciation is the sole path of knowledge' and that 'acceptance of physical life an act of the ignorant'. This state of the silent and contentless Self, maintains Sri Aurobindo, is the starting-point of the second Negation, viz., 'The Refusal of the Ascetic'.

Sri Aurobindo admits that the realisation of the ascetics represents "a state of conscious realisation which stands at the very summit of our possibility", and their attitude towards life constitutes an "indispensable element in human perfection". As such the philosophy of Asceticism, according to Sri Aurobindo is "more complete, more full, more perilous"² than the philosophy of Materialism. It is perilous because it arrives at the 'fictitious character of the individual ego, the unreality and purposelessness of human existence, the return into the Non-being or the relationless Absolute as the sole rational escape from the meaningless tangle of phenomenal life'.

It is this kind of ascetic ideal which has dominated the Indian mind, complains Sri Aurobindo, for the last two thousand years. Attempts have, of course, been made to have an adjustment between the exclusive claims of the Ascetics, on the one hand, and the exclusive claims of the Materialists, on the other; but such attempts have remained dynamically ineffective. As a result, the Indian mind has

¹ The conception of complete illusionism goes with the name of Gaudapāda in the history of Indian philosophy. In the orthodox terminology his philosophy is known as 'Ajāti-vāda', i.e., 'non-creationism'. See *Māṇḍūkya-Karikā*, i.e., his *Karikās* on *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad*.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

always been living in the shadow of the ascetic ideal. But the time has now come, feels Sri Aurobindo, when the age is gradually going out of sympathy with the ascetic ideal, which, by rejecting the world as an unreality, has failed to fulfill the constant human aspiration of a *divine life upon earth*.

And so, in order to achieve this aspiration, Sri Aurobindo says that we have to explore the field of our inner spiritual consciousness, where we can find a 'luminous reconciliation' between Spirit and Matter. And, in this connection, he points out that as we can enter directly into the gates of world-transcending consciousness, i.e., at the state of silent and contentless Self, we can also enter into a supramental consciousness, i.e., at the state of Supermind,—where the Self is realised as static as well as dynamic in character,—by passing through the cosmic consciousness, and through the other linking stages, viz., Higher-Mind, Illumined-Mind, Intuitive-Mind and Overmind.

When we shall enter into the supramental consciousness we shall realise that the Self is not silent and inactive alone, but that it is also dynamic; and, that it is not contentless and relationless but is full of infinite contents and relations or infinite names and forms. The Upanishads describe the experience of it as "the Self in us becoming all existences", as "seeing all existences in the Self", and "as seeing the Self in all existences," or, what is the same thing as "All is Brahman". Looked at from the supramental consciousness, the world is not an illusion or a dream or an hallucination, but is a conscious self-manifestation or self-development of the Self or Brahman. It is realized as an actualisation of one of the possibilities of Self's self-manifestation.

At the supramental state we shall, therefore, find, says Sri Aurobindo, a 'luminous reconciliation' between Spirit and Matter. In it, Matter reveals itself "as the figure and body of the Spirit", i.e., "Spirit in its self-formative extension", and the Spirit reveals itself as "the truth, the essence of Matter". Both Spirit and Matter are, thus, realised as divine, as real, and as essentially one. Mind and Life will also be disclosed at this supramental state as "at once figures and instruments of the supreme Conscious Being by which it extends and houses itself in material form and in that form unveils Itself to Its multiple centres of consciousness".

And, further, if we shall, thus, find a reconciliation or mutual comprehension of Spirit and Matter at the state of the Supermind, we shall be able to conceive the possibility of a fulfilment of the *divine life upon earth* through the descent of the supramental consciousness upon it. A supramental truth of Existence, and based upon it, a supramental conception of life, as also a supramental Yoga to actualise the supramental life here upon the earth will alone fulfil the constant and the fundamental human aspiration of a *divine life upon earth*.

Sri Aurobindo treats with great respect the claim of the realisation of the Static-Self by the Ascetics or the Adwaitins by calling it a "state of consciousness which stands at the very summit of our possibility". But he points out that, in itself, it does not exhaust the spiritual field. It is only one though a necessary realisation in the spiritual field; but it is not all-in-all. Moreover, the question in which the philosophy ought to be interested is not the question only of one's liberation; it is the question of attaining the ultimate knowledge of the world, and the question of fulfilling the human aspiration for a *divine life upon earth*. The aim of philosophy, he says, consists in conducting "a discovery of the real reality of things by which human existence can learn its law and aim and the principles of its perfection."¹

The Ascetics or the Adwaitins, in the opinion of Sri Aurobindo, did not ascend into the supramental consciousness, and, therefore, they failed to realize that the Self is not only static and contentless but that it is also dynamic and full of contents. They could have reached the state of Supermind provided they had continued their efforts to go beyond their realised state of Static-Self. But, taking the state of the Static-Self as the final height of the spiritual field, they stopped there.

Thus, looking from the standpoint of the Supermind, Sri Aurobindo has criticised the philosophy of Asceticism or Adwaitism seriously. He says that "the silent and the active Brahman are not different, opposite and irreconcilable entities, the one denying, the other affirming a cosmic illusion; they are one Brahman in two aspects,

¹ *The Human Cycle*, p. 93. (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1949).

positive and negative, and each is necessary to the other. It is out of this Silence that the Word which creates the worlds for ever proceeds; for the Word expresses that which is self-hidden in the Silence.”¹ Silence, therefore, does not reject the world, but it sustains it. When the Taittiriya Upanishad says that out of the Non-Being the Being appeared, we should mean by ‘Non-Being’ the infinite Self of Being, which is something beyond our conception of the universe. It is an indefinable Infinite. While the Being is the affirmation by the Non-Being of Itself as the free base of all cosmic-existence, Non-Being is a contrary affirmation of It’s freedom from all cosmic-existence.

Now, as the realisation of the Static-Self is a limited realisation, the ascetic philosophy cannot be regarded as the real Monism or Adwaita. The real Adwaita, according to Sri Aurobindo, is “that which admits all things as the one Brahman and does not seek to bisect Its existence into two compatible entities, an eternal Truth and an eternal Falsehood, Brahman and not-Brahman, Self and not-Self, a real Self and an unreal, yet perpetual Maya.”² The Ascetics have failed to realize that if the Self alone exists, then it must also be true that all is Self; that if the Self is no bounded power, then there must be some good and inherent reason in it for the manifestation of the world. If the world is a dream it should be “a dream originated and willed by the Self in its totality and, not only originated and willed, but supported and perpetually entertained. Moreover it is a dream existing in a Reality and the stuff of which it is made is that Reality.”³ Sri Aurobindo argues that “If the gold of which the vessel is made is real, how shall we suppose that the vessel itself is a mirage.”⁴ The words, viz., dream, illusion, etc., are, therefore, ‘tricks of speech,’ which though they represent a certain truth, also misrepresent it. The world is, therefore, not a phantasm or an hallucination of the mind; it is, on the contrary, the ‘substantial form of a Truth’.

It seems that there are, according to Sri Aurobindo, two great Vedantic formulas, viz., “One without a second,” and “All this is the Brahman.” And therefore, a true Vedantic philosophy must be able to

¹ *The Life Divine*, Vol. I. p. 33.

² *Ibid.*, p. 38

³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

perceive the truth of them both and relate them in its philosophy. But, the philosophy of asceticism or adwaitism has failed to see the truth of the latter formula and to relate it with the former. Sri Aurobindo says, "we perceive that in the Indian ascetic ideal the great Vedantic formula, "One without a second", has not been read sufficiently in the light of that other formula equally imperative, "All this is the Brahman."¹ Consequently, the philosophy of asceticism or Adwaitism has failed to understand the truth of the One in Matter. In other words, declaring the static-Self alone as the reality and Matter as unreality, the philosophy of asceticism has failed to fulfil the human aspiration of *divine life upon earth*.

Thus has Sri Aurobindo rejected both the philosophies of Asceticism and Materialism, because they do not satisfy the human aspiration to have a *divine life here on earth* for which he sets out to give us, from the supramental standpoint, "a conception of an Omnipresent Reality of which neither the Non-Being at the one end nor the universe at the other are negations that annul; they are rather different states of the Reality, obverse and reverse affirmation."² The highest experience possible upon earth of this Reality, he says, is Sachchidananda, i.e., Sat, Chit and Ananda or Existence, Consciousness-Force and Bliss. He calls his philosophy as a philosophy of 'Realistic Adwaitism' or 'Integral Adwaitism, which, in his opinion, represents the philosophy of true Adwaita.

Sri Aurobindo, therefore, asks us to ascend above the experience of the static-Self in order to have the experience of the Supermind, so that we get thereupon a complete knowledge of the Self as well as of the World. He calls the consciousness of the Supermind as the Integral spiritual consciousness, because it reveals to us integral self-knowledge as also integral world-knowledge. He says that "an integral spiritual consciousness carries in it a knowledge of all the terms of being; it links the highest to the lowest through all the mediating terms and achieves an indivisible whole. At the highest summit of things it opens to the reality, ineffable because superconscient to all but its own self-awareness, of the Absolute. At the lowest end of our being it perceives the Inconscience from which our evolution begins;

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

but at the same time it is aware of the One and the All self-involved in those depths, it unveils the secret Consciousness in the Inconscience. Interpretative, revelatory, moving between these two extremes, its vision discovers the manifestation of the One in the Many, the identity of the Infinite in the disparity of things finite, the presence of the timeless Eternal in eternal Time it is this seeing that illumines for it the meaning of the universe.’¹

Now, since our idea and the sense of Reality depend upon the nature of our consciousness, the supramental or integral spiritual consciousness presupposes an integral spiritual Reality. In other words, looked from the supramental or integral spiritual consciousness, the Absolute is Integral Spiritual Absolute. The philosophy of Sri Aurobindo has been variously called as ‘Integralism,’ ‘Integral Adwaitism’ etc. We, however, propose to call it ‘Integral Spiritual Absolutism’, in order to make a distinction between it and other philosophies of Absolutism, viz., Materialism, Vitalism, Mentalism, and Spiritualism or Asceticism.

RAMCHANDRA TRIVEDI

SUICIDES AND SUICIDES

SRI Aurobindo's warning against suicide is well-known. Suicide, he points out, is no solution to any problem. In fact, it multiplies the very difficulties that are sought to be escaped from by this drastic step. For, after the physical life is ended, the being suddenly finds itself in alien surroundings full of foreign elements. The normal coat of protection, i.e. the physical body, is not there and one is exposed helplessly to all kinds of painful contacts in the subtle physical and vital worlds in which one finds oneself.¹ The very chaotic atmosphere which preceded the exit is there too in a more oppressive way because there is no getting out of it at will. The fears, anxieties, and apprehensions of the earth-life stare in the face in a magnified form. Nothing has been got rid of. Even after this painful transit is over and one comes back to the next incarnation, the conditions which had been abruptly left behind in the previous birth, are repeated as it were to enable the soul to continue what was interrupted and work out its own solution.

This, in brief, is the position, and it is understandable. Does the same apply to cases, asks a friend from the United States, to suicides of the kind prevalent in Japan? Those, for example, who end their life from a code of chivalry or as part of ancestor worship or on matters of honour? What about those who sacrifice themselves for public causes, rightly or wrongly, as in Vietnam? And then what about those who are forced to commit suicide, as in the case of Seneca and Lucan in the court of Nero?

As these questions raise important issues, I asked the Mother about it. And what She said is interesting. She said in sum:

The suicides in Japan are altogether on a different basis. The people there have a strong and genuine faith in the object of their self-

¹ This post-mortem state following an unnatural death is quite different from the conditions that follow a normal death. For, in natural cases, the being has prepared itself for the departure at the termination of the experience for which it came to birth, and the conditions through which it has to pass follow the usual lines of transit, the details being decided by the overall trend of *samskāras* (formed tendencies) of the life that is just passed. These conditions are, so to say, in affinity with the immediate past of the soul. In case of suicide the soul is almost lost in the maelstrom of the dark forces that crowd upon one following the unnatural exit. The direction is lost,

ending. And this faith stands them in good stead. For instance, if one dies to join someone who has just passed away, his sincerity and faith assuredly link him with the person across and things work from both ends to bring about the desired result.

What about suicides done under the pressure of a mistaken idea about the justness of a cause, I asked. Even there, the Mother replied, it is not the mental idea—right or wrong—but the psychic attitude that decides. If the spirit behind the act is sincere and the sacrifice has the quality of self-consecration, then there is an automatic protection gained in the process and the person is not subjected to the usual painful consequences.¹

Regarding forced suicides, She said, it differs from person to person, depending upon the soul-development, the circumstances that surround the crisis, the destiny of the person etc.

Incidentally, the Mother observed, each person has his own destiny and even in apparently identical conditions no two people fare in the same way. This can be clearly seen in other worlds than here in the physical. There are these worlds with their own organisation and their own laws. They exist all the time. Only man does not see them normally because he does not have the vision therefor. They are, nonetheless, real. In fact from a standpoint it is this world that is just an appearance, a vestibule to the larger systems of existence. Just because his senses seize easily the objects of the physical universe man thinks that the physical is the only world. Man needs this limitation of the senses as a protection in the present state of ignorance:

“Only in human limitation man lives safe”.

(Sri Aurobindo: *Savitri*)

PRABUDDHA

¹ So, after all, there is a truth underlying the institutions like the *Sati*. Maybe when compulsion came to be exercised on the unwilling partner, it lost its *raison d'être*, but in its principle it was essentially sound. So too, the Indian tradition of heavenly destiny for those who lay down their lives on the battlefield.

THE MARCH OF INDIA

VI

LAW IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL INDIA

THE system of law under which a people lives is as much an index of its spirit and culture as literature or art. It is therefore of some importance to know something of Indian law, not indeed in the details of enactment or other provisions of the law which are for lawyers to study, but in the main outlines of principle which might help us understand the Indian tradition in its broad features.

At the outset we are faced with two diametrically opposite viewpoints, expressed by two authorities of great eminence. There must obviously be some element of truth underlying both, but neither can be taken wholly at their face value.

Sir Henry Maine, the celebrated author of *Ancient Law*, expresses himself as follows on the nature of Hindu Law: "On the whole, the impression left on the mind by the study of these books (of the ancient Hindus on Law) is that a more awful tyranny never existed than this which proceeded from the union of political, intellectual and spiritual ascendancy." Maine is here obviously referring to "those wicked Brahmins" to whom it was rather fashionable in his time, and even later, to attribute all that displeased the critics of India. In fairness to those Brahmins of old, one may however be permitted to add that however great their "intellectual and spiritual ascendancy" during certain periods of our history, they seldom enjoyed any "political" power. India had very few dynasties of Brahmin rulers and the priest rarely exercised the powers of the Church in Europe. The learned author concedes however that "Hindu jurisprudence has a substratum of forethought and sound judgment," although he adds a rejoinder saying that "irrational imitation has engrafted in it an immense apparatus of cruel absurdities." What these "cruel absurdities" might be we should have occasion to examine, and also perhaps the element of "irrational imitation". But it might be mentioned here that there is hardly a system of jurisprudence anywhere

in the world at present or in the past that can be said to be free from those very human defects, and a jurist of such eminence as Sir Henry Maine must have been aware of this simple fact.

On the other side of the scale is the judgment of one of the brightest luminaries of modern Indian law, the late Sir Rashbehary Ghosh, one-time Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and a contemporary of Sir Henry Maine. Ghosh observes in his *Law of Mortgages*, that "Hindu Law will at no distant date render the same service to jurisprudence that Sanskrit has already done to the sister science of philology." He implies, it would appear, that the ancient law of the Hindus has some positive contributions to make quite apart from its great historical value. We shall have to examine how far this is borne out by the record.

The first thing that strikes one about the law of the Hindus is its long, almost unprecedented continuity. It has served the needs of the Indian people for six thousand years and more, assuming the Vedas were composed somewhere about 4000 B.C., as many Indian scholars and great jurists like Kane hold. When the Muslims came, they found it so firmly entrenched in the habits of the people that they dared not replace it by their own system, at least in the matter of civil disputes in so far as they concerned the Hindus who formed the bulk of the population. The British too during the first thirty years of their occupation did not think it fit to meddle with the existing system. It was only gradually and after a good deal of hesitation and groping experiment that they finally decided to scrap the whole structure of the old criminal law and much of the civil law as well and replaced them by their own peculiar codes based on the English system. In other words, it was only during the last century and a half that the old Indian law has been deliberately superseded by another but even now not in its entirety. In the matter of marriages, adoption, succession and religious usage, the Hindus continue to be governed by their ancient laws in so far as these have not been modified by legislation. And what is still more significant, the judge administering Hindu law has even now to ascertain, as did his predecessor in hoary antiquity, whether a disputed doctrine has been received by the particular school which governs the District with which he has to deal.

This insistence on local and regional variations has been another

distinguishing feature of Indian law. This was a natural result of the way the law has developed. There are critics who would deny any "development" in Hindu law. But that is a view born of the misleading appearance of the old texts and commentaries. These ancient authors and commentators loved to create an impression that they were merely following in the footsteps of their predecessors, while actually making very substantial changes in the body of the law as any casual glance at the state of the law in ancient and medieval times would show. This was done not with a view to mislead but to preserve the fiction—and where is the system of law without its fictions—that the law was derived ultimately from one original source, the infallible Vedas, of which more anon. Whatever might have been the authority of the scriptures in giving the law a sacrosanct character, the law was ultimately derived from custom and the usages of the people. And these usages, in a country as vast as India, were bound to differ widely from place to place and from community to community in the absence of adequate means of communication and interchange. Each major area developed in course of time its distinctive texts, each with its major or minor variations in the substance of law. These have survived even today and are recognised as distinct "schools" whose tenets apply to particular areas. There is the Bengal school, the Benares school, the Bombay or Maharashtra school, the Madras or Dravida school, each with its well-defined area of application. Here is another example of the principle of Unity in Diversity, which has been a consistent feature of the Indian tradition; for these schools, whatever their differences, are really and basically one in their attitude to Law.

A third characteristic feature of Indian law has been that although it has been "codified" in texts and digests and commentaries, the codes resemble more the Commentaries of Blackstone on English law than the ones promulgated by Napoleon in France. This was inevitable in the process of its growth. It is now well-known that "Mahomed... only developed the existing social, religious and administrative customs of the Arab people into a new system dictated to him often in a state of trance..."¹ The unknown jurists who "codi-

¹ *The Ideal of Human Unity*, by Sri Aurobindo.

fied" Hindu law in its early stages must have performed a similar function. The great name Manu to whom is ascribed the most well-known code of ancient Indian law, the *Manu-smṛiti* or *Manava Dharmashastra*, "is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution.... His law is the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its Manu has fixed for it. If there comes an embodied Manu, a living Moses or Mahomed, he is only the prophet or spokesman of the Divinity who is veiled in the fire and the cloud."¹

The codes of Hindu law preserve to this day the stamp of their origins. The notion of a sovereign authority, the state whether in the form of monarchy or democratic republic, promulgating laws binding on the entire community and touching on all or most of its activities—the notion popularised in England by Bentham and Austin in the nineteenth century—was practically unknown in India before the coming of the English. The Muslim rulers did try to impose their will on the people in the shape of arbitrary laws, but they too were surrounded by divines, men learned in the Muslim Law who would not easily agree to such misuse of power. In Hindu states, the king was not the principal law-making authority. He did issue orders but they were mainly of an administrative nature and intended to secure the proper working of the nation's *dharma*, the vast and complex body of rules and customs that regulate the life of the people in most matters of importance, social, economic, religious and even political. It was the business of the code-makers and commentators to find out and record what was this *dharma*. Once laid down, the *dharma* was as much binding on the ruler as on the ruled. The reason why people obeyed was partly due to the strong and inherent religious sense—the *dharma* was regarded as something divine bearing the sanction of the gods and of the highest scriptures, the Vedas; in large part it was also because of the great powers of insight and sympathy, and

the logical acumen of the Brahmin Shastrakars, the code-makers, who thereby earned a respect for integrity and fairness not even shared by the king. Maine's precious dicta about the absurd cruelties and irrationalism of these men carry no sense in this context.

It is true that the codes did contain and even countenanced what may today be regarded as injustices, for example, in their attitude to the Shudra and the untouchable, the widow and the woman in general. But it would be a total misunderstanding to blame the code-makers for faults and attitudes which existed in the society itself. All they could do was simply to record and elaborate; they had no power to change the state of society. That was left to the religious reformer and the mystic, the saints and sages who appeared in a long succession from the time of the Vedic Rishis onwards. But even they found the social fabric much too resistant to change and there was therefore in India no radical alteration in the social and economic structure of the types we now see all over the world. Whatever changes came were the result not so much of planned effort as of the operation of blind forces. This was a peculiarity shared by ancient and medieval India with most other civilised nations of the world.

The codes of law being essentially in their nature the faithful records of the social, economic, religious and political habits of the people, they are bound to present a composite appearance which is somewhat bewildering to the modern reader, accustomed as he is to a clear demarcation into almost water-tight compartments of these to him quite distinct aspects of the nation's life. The ancients took a more synthetic view. The Indian codes "embrace the whole life of the society; there is no distinction between the political and administrative, the social and the religious law; these not only all meet in one system, but run inextricably into and are determined by each other."¹ The name given to "law" understood in this wide sense was *dharma*, a term which really defies definition but can broadly speaking be taken in this context in the sense of all the rules of ideal living that society evolves from time to time and are recorded and codified in manual and digest. The codes are thus known by the generic term Dharmashastra, the Books of Dharma. Their composite character

¹ *Ibid.*

might be well illustrated by the following brief synopsis of the contents of the earliest of these records, the Dharmasutras of Gautama, Baudhayana, Apastamba and Vasistha, on which were based in large measure the later and more elaborate Dharmashastras of Manu and Yajñavalkya.

The topics are mainly these: the duties, obligations and privileges of the different castes, *varṇa*, and of the principal orders, namely, the students, the householders, the forest recluse and the ascetic who constituted society; the duties of women in general and of the wife (as well as of the husband) in particular; rules applicable to the different castes in conditions of difficulty or in an emergency; rules as to food, drink and ceremonial purity; rules of etiquette concerning guests and teachers and others held in esteem; detailed prescriptions relating to the forms of worship and the various sacraments that in a society governed largely by the religious spirit were to guide a man through life and prepare him for a better life hereafter; acts of charity and expiation of sins; "laws" properly so-called that regulated contracts and sales and debts and pledges, the relations between master and servant and between partners in business, that fixed the rates of interest, regulated questions of succession, rights to property, adoption, marriage, divorce, separation and maintenance. In addition to these topics of "civil" and religious law, there is a large section devoted to petty misdemeanours and crimes like theft, assault and abuse, adultery, rape and the disturbance of the public peace which form part of the penal code. Procedural matters connected with the setting up of courts and the conduct of trials occupy an important place even in these early texts. Constitutional law and the rules relating to the civil and military administration form a separate branch, known as *Rajadharma*, the law affecting the king, and "international law" in a fairly developed form meant for the guidance of kings in their relations with other kings (within the limits of India) receives a good deal of attention in the hands of these ancient jurists. All these topics are further enlarged in the codes of the Classical period. A clear demarcation begins to be made between civil and criminal jurisdiction, or more accurately put, between offences that are "cognisable" by the state and those that are not and are left to the discretion of the offended party. The number of cognisable offences

comes to be fixed at a conventional figure, eighteen, but their number grew and had to be included in a special category within the eighteen, under a general heading called "miscellaneous". This is one of the "fictions" adopted by the Hindu legists to allow of the growth of the law within the old framework.

Religion and custom being the bases of the law, provision had also to be made to bring within its purview the large body of mainly unwritten rules and conventions that governed much of the life of the family and home, *kula*, the caste, *jāti*, the craft or trade guild, *śrenī*, and the village as a corporate unit, *pūga* or *gaṇa*; there was also the monastic or other religious order, like that of the Buddhists or the Jainas for example, that had its own system of laws and regulations. The king or the state had to ascertain what these rules or laws were and to see that they were not infringed. Much of the science of government, *Arthashastra*, is concerned with this aspect of the law. The king himself, in consultation with his ministers and with the assistance of the officials, added in a small measure to the body of the law by the issue of decrees of an administrative nature, *rāja-śāsana*.

But one must here emphasise what must have become apparent from the foregoing discussion that the king in Hindu India was neither the source nor the expositor of the law; the ultimate source was the impersonal entity called *dharma*, and the business of the royal councillors and officials as well as of the Brahmin legists and judges was simply to expound the *dharma* as they understood it. The Austinian conception of positive law, as commands of the sovereign enforced by his might irrespective of whether they are morally right or wrong, was never recognised in ancient or medieval India. The "rule of law" in which the modern Englishman and American take a legitimate pride was enunciated in clear terms nearly three thousand years ago, in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The *Upanishad* says, "This is the power of the ruling (Kshatriya) class, namely, law (*dharma*). Therefore there is nothing higher than law. So, a weak man controls the strong man by law, just as if by a king. Verily, that which is law is truth; therefore, they say of a man who speaks the truth, 'he speaks the law', or of a man who speaks the law, 'he speaks the truth'. Verily, both these are the same thing."

It would now have been made clear that the two principal me-

thods of adding to or amending the existing law were almost entirely lacking in ancient and medieval India; they run counter to the Indian tradition. The Muslim kings did introduce some legislation based on personal *fiat*, but the boldest of them dared not touch the civil law affecting Hindus. The decisions given by their judges formed a body of case-law, but it too applied to criminal cases alone. The British on their part as we have seen hesitated for a moment to make any radical change, but ultimately the Benthamite idea and the Austinian view of legislation prevailed and Hindu law today is only a caricature of its ancient self.

SANAT K. BANERJI

SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

IX. THE INWARDIZATION AND THE ASCENSION

His knowledge an inview caught unfathomable,
An outview by no brief horizons cut:
He thought and felt in all, his gaze had power.

(Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri*, Book II Canto XV, p. 341)

The thing to be gained is the bringing in of a Power of Consciousness (the Supramental) not yet organised or active directly in earth-nature, even in the spiritual life, but yet to be organised and made directly active.

(Sri Aurobindo on *Himself and on The Mother*, p. 167)

The overhead ascension is not indispensable for the usual spiritual purposes,—but it is indispensable for the purposes of this Yoga. For its aim is to become aware of and liberate and transform and unite all the being in the light of a Truth-Consciousness which is above and cannot be reached if there is no entirely inward-going and no transcending and upward-going movement.

(*Ibid.*, pp. 179-80)

THE Integral Yoga of Transformation has for its objective not merely the supreme realisation of Sachchidananda, but His divine self-expression, the flawless manifestation of the active Brahman, in our divinely transfigured embodied earthly existence.

But the question is: how to realise this goal of our Yoga and what it is that may possibly be the medium of these realising ascensions and world-possessing descents? For, in the actually elaborated evolutionary status of human consciousness, mind represents the highest cosmic principle and power of consciousness so far organised in man the mental being. But this Mind-Consciousness, even in its highest flights, is no more than a movement in the Ignorance: it is not inherently Truth-Conscious. And hence it is altogether incapable of

possessing or even attaining to the Divine; at best it can immobilise itself and rest satisfied with

“Reflections of the sun in waters still”¹

But it is far from our goal to be contented with “bright or shadowy photographs or films of a distant Reality”² that the mind can at most achieve for us: we want to ascend to the supreme Reality in full awareness and bring down its dynamic glories and splendours in the play of our waking state.

But we cannot but take note of the fact of spiritual experience certified by most seekers of the Truth, that an immense hiatus *seems* to exist between the supramental Truth-Consciousness and the Mind-Consciousness we normally know of. And unless this seemingly unbridgeable gulf intervening between the two is satisfactorily bridged, we have to forego our dream

.....to plant on earth the living Truth
Or make of Matter’s world the home of God.³

In that case, we shall have no other choice than to take a super-conscious leap from the station of Mind into the Unknowable beyond and to agree willy-nilly to the following trenchant conclusion of the incredulous Darkness persuading Savitri to abandon her task of world-transformation:

He who would turn to God must leave the world;
He who would live in the Spirit, must give up life;
He who has met the Self, renounces self.
The voyagers of the million routes of mind
Who have travelled through Existence to its end,
Sages exploring the world-ocean’s vasts,
Have found extinction the sole harbour safe.⁴

¹ *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, p. 739.

² *The Life Divine*, p. 250.

³ *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, p. 725.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 713.

Indeed, Mind fails as an instrument and medium both for our conscious ascension into the Infinite as well as for the dynamic descent and manifestation of the supreme powers of the Spirit. As has been so well said, mind cannot arrive at identity with the Absolute, it can only disappear into it in a swoon or extinction, into St. John of the Cross's 'divine Darkness of the mystic Night.' Also, as a medium of divine expression and action, the mind plane cannot in its very nature allow of the supreme workings native to the divine Consciousness-Force. "The mind spiritualised, purified, liberated, perfected within its own limits may come as near as possible to a faithful mental translation, but...this is after all a relative fidelity and an imperfect perfection... The mind...can take its (the Infinite's) suggestions and act them out *in its own way*, a way always fragmentary, derivative and subject to a greater or less deformation, but it cannot be *itself* the direct and perfect instrument of the infinite Spirit acting in its own knowledge."¹ (Italics ours)

It becomes imperative then for the fulfilment of our divine destiny upon earth, that man should be able to raise himself much above the plane of mind and normally and permanently, even in his waking state, live in the supernal heights of the Spirit, also to manifest and organise in his embodied existence new planes and powers of consciousness other than and superior to mind, so that these may offer themselves as the proper media and instrumentation through which the divine Will and Wisdom can freely act and self-express.

But between the Mind and the Spirit, are there other superior planes of spiritual consciousness—not merely static and introspective, but creative and dynamic—which man can possibly hope to ascend? And is it at all possible for man to develop and organise these supernal planes in his waking consciousness so much so that he may outgrow and transcend his present mental status and become something more than human?

The answer and hope lie in the process of evolutionary elaboration of manifested existence here upon the face of the earth. The results so far achieved by Evolution are indeed wonderfully superb: it is surely a long march from the insentient Matter to the self-conscious

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 896.

Mind of man. But who can say that the evolutionary *nisus* has exhausted itself with the emergence of man the mental being, so that the only possible course left for the embodied soul is how to make an exit from this not too perfect world-existence and take the transcendent leap into the Unknowable and Unmanifest?

As a matter of fact, the evolutionary oestrus is even now very much at work and it is not liable to annul itself until and unless the divine Sachchidananda is fully manifested here in our embodied existence and 'the earthly life become the Life divine.' For such is the original intended meaning of creation, this is the secret spiritual sense of the evolutionary march. Thus Savitri answered to refute the conjecture of the sophist Power of doubt and denial:

How sayst thou Truth can never light the human mind
 And bliss can never invade the mortal's heart
 Or God descend into the world he made?
 If in the meaningless Void the creation rose,
 If from a bodiless Force Matter was born,
 If Life could climb in the unconscious tree,
 If green delight break into emerald leaves
 And its laughter of beauty blossom in the flower,
 If sense could wake in tissue, nerve and cell,
 And Thought seize the grey matter of the brain,
 And soul peep from its secrecy through the flesh,
How shall the nameless light not leap on men,
And unknown powers emerge from Nature's sleep?
 Even now hints of a luminous Truth like stars
 Arise in the mind-mooned splendour of Ignorance;
 Even now the deathless Lover's touch we feel:
 If the chamber's door is even a little ajar,
 What then can hinder God from stealing in
 Or who forbid his kiss on the sleeping soul?"¹

But the skeptic may still rejoin that the past is no sure guide to the future and plausibility is never equivalent to certainty. So, after

¹ *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, pp. 727-28.

establishing the plausibility of our goal of divine transformation of the waking existence, we must now specially point out the steps following which this goal can be realised in practice. And for this we must rely, surely not on philosophical speculation or logical surmisings, but solely on the verdict of the ever-ascending and ever-deepening spiritual exploration of our being and becoming. For, this alone has any real validity in this field.

Now, there are two types of movements of our consciousness through which it becomes possible for us to have access to the deeper and superior reaches of our being: *a movement inward* and *an upward ascension*.

By the first movement of inward penetration, we seek to break asunder the wall separating our subliminal self from our present surface existence, leave the surface consciousness and live entirely in the realm of our inner mind, inner life, inner subtle-physical and finally in the inmost soul of our being. This inmost soul or the psychic being is the Purusha in the secret heart, *hṛdye guhāyām*, a portion of the Divine Self supporting the individual nature.

Now, an enlargement and completion of our *actual* evolutionary status becomes the very first consequence of such an inwardization of consciousness. For, our inner being is found to possess a dynamism and potentialities much superior to those of our surface mind and life and body. As a matter of fact, "it is capable of *a direct communication* with the universal forces, movements, objects of the cosmos, *a direct feeling and opening* to them, *a direct action* on them and even a *widening* of itself beyond the limits of the personal mind, the personal life, the body, so that it feels itself more and more a universal being no longer limited by the existing walls of our too narrow mental, vital, physical existence. This widening can extend itself to a complete entry into the consciousness of cosmic Mind, into unity with the universal Life, even into a oneness with universal Matter."¹ (Italics ours).

But this first result is not all that can be desired. For, however cosmic in scope and perfected in dynamism, our being remains still embedded in the field of diminished cosmic truth, if not in total cos-

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 253.

mic Ignorance. If we would transcend the limitations of our *present* evolutionary status, we must seek to become *conscious* in what is now superconscient to us and *ascend* to the native heights of the Spirit not at present accessible to our waking consciousness. Thus, "the psychic movement inward to the inner being,...must be completed by an opening upward to a supreme spiritual status."¹

Now, this is the second—and from our point of view, much more momentous—consequence of an accomplished inward living. For, it is found that once the entry into the inner subliminal realms is successfully undertaken, the inner being exerts a growing pressure on the "strong hard and bright lid of mind,—mind constricting, dividing and separative"²—that clouds the superconscient from our waking consciousness. This pressure becomes in the end so great that the lid of mind wears thin, opens and disappears, and our consciousness becomes privileged to have a vision of the supernal things. What we see by this upward opening is "an Infinity above us, an eternal Presence or an infinite Existence, an infinity of consciousness, an infinity of bliss,—a boundless Self, a boundless Light, a boundless Power, a boundless Ecstasy."³

But even this 'wide awareness from below' is not sufficient. We must make an actual ascension to the height of the spirit above. Fortunately, this too is an alternative or subsequent result of the inward living. Our consciousness rises up towards the reaches of our being, much beyond the present mental level.

But here a very serious difficulty supervenes and unless this is successfully remedied in time, one may be very well led away from the path of divine transformation of Nature into the silent immobility of the Transcendent and Unmanifest.

Indeed, since the heights to which our consciousness attains in its upward ascension are in general superconscient to our mind, the latter fails to remain awake there and hence considers these ascents as only luminously blank. Thus, our mind-consciousness is tempted to effectuate a short-cut and take a straight jump to the Transcendent. On this line, "the first most ordinary result is a discovery of a vast static

¹ *The Life Divine*, p.809.

² *Ibid.*, p. 809.

³ *Ibid.*, 810.

and silent Self which we feel to be our real or our basic existence.... There may be even an extinction, a Nirvana both of our active being and of the sense of self into a Reality that is indefinable and inexpressible.... It is possible to remain in a Nirvana of all individuality, to stop at a static realisation or, regarding all the cosmic movement as a superficial play or illusion imposed on the silent Self, to pass into some supreme immobile and immutable status beyond the universe.”¹

But fortunately this is not the only possible line of supernormal spiritual experience: the withdrawal from all participation in the world-existence and the immergence or extinction into the Unmanifest is not the only spiritual destiny decreed for the human soul. A supreme divine return from the verge of Nirvana into the world-play is equally possible and this with the undiminished splendours and potencies of all the spiritual wealth amassed at the summits. The choice is indeed hard and difficult. For, the ultimate and definitive withdrawal into the Infinite and Eternity is too alluring a prospect to be rejected by the ascending soul. To have instead ‘the supernal birth’ one must have

...trod along extinction’s narrow edge
Near the high verges of eternity.²

This double alternative and the difficulty of choosing between the two have been beautifully depicted in the following passage of Sri Aurobindo’s *Savitri*:

She had risen up from body, mind and life;
She was no more a Person in a world,
She had escaped into infinity.

*
**

*Only some last annulment now remained,
Annihilation’s vague indefinable step:
A memory of being still was there*

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 254.

² *Savitri*, Book. II Canto. XV, p. 339.

And kept her separate from nothingness:
 She was in That but still became not That.
 This shadow of herself so close to nought
 Could be again self's point d'appui to live,
Return out of the Inconcievable
 And be what some mysterious vast might choose.
 Even as the Unknowable decreed,
She might be nought or new-become the All,
 Or if the omnipotent Nihil took a shape
 Emerge as someone and redeem the world.
 Even, she might learn what the mystic cipher held,
 This seeming exit or closed end of all
 Could be a blind tenebrous passage screened from sight,
 Her state the eclipsing shell of a darkened sun
 On its secret way to the Ineffable.
 Even now her splendid being might flame back
 Out of the silence and the nullity,
 A gleaming portion of the All-Wonderful,
A power of some all-affirming Absolute,
 A shining mirror of the eternal Truth
 To show to the One-in-all its manifest face,
 To the souls of men their deep identity.
 Or she might wake into God's quietude
Beyond the cosmic day and cosmic night
 And rest appeared in his white eternity."¹

But once we set aside the exit-solution as not conforming to our goal and try instead to become aware in those supernal realms where we could not remain awake before, we find that our consciousness rises to those ascending heights of the Spirit where its immobile status is but the necessary foundation for a greatly potent and luminous dynamism. Once the power to remain awake develops in us, once we rise out of the sphere of mortal mind and look deep and high and far, we discover the splendours of a graded series of planes and powers of consciousness—an intervening spiritual mind-range—serving as

¹ *Savitrī*, Book VII Canto VI, pp. 622-24 (Italics Ours).

links and bridges between the now normal waking mind and 'the native heights of supramental and pure spiritual being.'

It is in these 'radiant altitudes' of the Spirit that "we find the secret we are seeking, the means of the transition, the needed step towards a supramental transformation; for we perceive a graduality of ascent, a communication with a more and more deep and immense light and power from above, a scale of intensities which can be regarded as so many stairs in the ascension of Mind or in a descent into Mind from That which is beyond it."¹

In this incessant ascending gradation through which our consciousness rises towards the supramental Truth-Consciousness, four principal ascents may be distinguished. These gradations may be broadly described as 'a series of sublimations of the consciousness' through what Sri Aurobindo has termed Higher Mind, Illumined Mind, Intuition and Overmind; "there is a succession of self-transmutations at the summit of which lies the Supermind or Divine Gnosis.... All these degrees are gnostic in their principle and power; for even at the first we begin to pass from a consciousness based on an original Inconscience and acting in a general Ignorance or in a mixed Knowledge-Ignorance to a consciousness based on a secret self-existent Knowledge and.... In themselves these grades are grades of energy-substance of the Spirit... they are domains of being, grades of the substance and energy of the spiritual being, fields of existence which are each a level of the universal Consciousness-Force constituting and organising itself into a higher status.... Each stage of this ascent is a general, if not a total, conversion of the being into a new light and power of a greater existence."²

For the characterisation of this fourfold ascent and the dynamic-spiritual implications thereof, the reader is referred to *Chapter XXVI, Book Two* ("The Ascent towards Supermind") of Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine*. For the continuity of our discussion we content ourselves with only some broad hints about the nature of these four higher grades of our being.

The first ascent out of our normal mentality is into a *Higher Mind* of automatic and spontaneous Knowledge, where knowledge

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 254.

² *Ibid.*, p. 834.

assumes the nature of Truth-Thought. Its most characteristic movement is "a mass ideation, a system or totality of truth-seeing at a single view;...this thought is a self-revelation of eternal Wisdom, not an acquired Knowledge."¹

Beyond the Higher Mind of Truth-Thought is the *Illumined Mind* of Truth-Sight, a Mind where

There are vasts of vision and eternal suns,
Oceans of an immortal luminousness,
Flame-hills assaulting heaven with their peaks,
There dwelling all becomes a blaze of sight,
A burning head of vision leads the mind,
Thought trails behind it its long comet tail;
The heart glows, an illuminate and seer,
And sense is kindled into identity.²

Thus the characteristic power of the Illumined Mind is not Thought but Vision; it is the field of "the outpourings of massive lightnings of flaming sun-stuff." And on the dynamic side there is here "a golden drive, a luminous 'enthousiasmos' of inner force and power,...almost a violent impetus of rapid transformation."³

Next in the order of ascension is the *Intuitive Mind* whose characteristic power is an intimate and exact Truth-perception which is much more than sight and conception. Intuition is in us "a projecting blade, edge or point of a far-off supermind light entering into and modified by some intermediate truth-mind substance above us.... Intuition has a fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeing, a power of inspiration or truth-hearing, a power of truth-touch or immediate seizing of significance,...a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth."⁴

Thus

Intuition's lightnings range in a bright pack
Hunting all hidden truths out of their lairs,

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 836.

² *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, p. 740.

³ *The Life Divine*, p. 839.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 843.

Its fiery edge of seeing absolute
 Cleaves into locked unknown retreats of self,
 Rummages the sky-recesses of the brain,
 Lights up the occult chambers of the heart;
 Its spear-point ictus of discovery
 Pressed on the cover of name, the screen of form,
 Strips bare the secret soul of all that is.
 Thought there has revelation's sun-bright eyes;
 The Word, a mighty and inspiring Voice,
 Enters Truth's inmost cabin of privacy
 And tears away the veil from God and life.¹

Beyond the plane of the Intuitive Mind is a superconscient cosmic Mind, a principle of global knowledge which carries in it 'a delegated light from the supramental gnosis.' The Overmind is in direct contact with the Supramental Truth-Consciousness and represents the 'highest possible status-dynamis' of the Spirit in the spiritual-mind range. 'The cosmic empire of the Overmind'² represents 'the boundless finite's last expanse'³ and

Time's buffer state bordering Eternity,
 Too vast for the experience of man's soul:
 All here gathers beneath one golden sky:
 The Powers that build the cosmos station take
 In its house of infinite possibility;
 Each god from there builds his own nature's world;
 Ideas are phalanxed like a group of sums;
 Thought crowds in masses seized by one regard;
 All Time is one body, Space a single book:
 There is the Godhead's universal gaze,
 And there the boundaries of immortal Mind:⁴

The Overmind may be considered to be the delegate of Supermind to the lower hemisphere of Knowledge-Ignorance; it links the latter with that supramental Gnosis or Truth-Consciousness, "...while yet at the same time with its brilliant golden Lid it veils the face of

¹ *Savitri*, Book X Canto IV, pp. 740-41.

^{2 3 4} *Ibid.*, p. 741.

the greater Truth from our sight....This then is the occult link we were looking for; this is the Power that at once connects and divides the supreme Knowledge and the cosmic Ignorance."¹

With the Overmind we thus reach the line that parts and joins the lower and the upper hemispheres of existence. Here two possibilities open up before the soul. Either it may seek to reach the supreme supracosmic Sachchidananda direct from the spiritualised mind-range and in that process depart out of its cosmic formation into "the eternally static oneness of Sachchidananda or rather pure Sat (Existence), absolute and eternal or else a pure Non-existence, absolute and eternal."²

But evidently this is not our line. Since we seek to possess divinely our world-being as well as our self-being, we must cross the borderline, pass into the upper hemisphere transcending even the highest reach of spiritual mind and seek to realise Sachchidananda on the plane of Supermind. For, supermind is Sachchidananda's "...power of self-awareness and world-awareness, the world being known as within itself and not outside.... [It is] the Truth-Consciousness whether above or in the universe by which the Divine knows not only his own essence and being but his *manifestation also*. Its fundamental character is knowledge by identity, by that the Self is known, the Divine Sachchidananda is known, but also the truth of manifestation is known, because this too is That."³

Hence it becomes imperative for the soul to pass through the supramental realisation if, instead of departing into the Transcendence, it would simultaneously live in the transcendence of the supreme Sachchidananda and possess its world-view too.

But even these supreme ascents accomplished in full spiritual awareness do not prove sufficient for our purpose. These cannot cure our waking consciousness of its apparently irremediable spiritual penury. For that a supreme movement of descent should follow the supreme movement of ascension and Heaven should consent to come down upon Earth. But is that at all possible?

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 255.

² Sri Aurobindo, *On Yoga II*, p. 261.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 261, 264.

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

THE DELIGHT OF EXISTENCE

THE greatest assertion of the Upanishadic Vedanta is a double dictum: एकमेवाद्वितीयम् (One without a second) and सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म (all this is verily the Brahman). It is this assertion that entitles it to the unique privilege of being a universal religion, for it embraces all aspects of Reality and reconciles all apparent antinomies of its diverse self-expression. But the boldest, the most remarkable, the most staggering Truth, underlying and irradiating this assertion, is that the Brahman is pure Delight—रसो वै स All that is in the universe of Time and Space is the Brahman and nothing but the Brahman; and all that is beyond this tiny, teeming universe is also He, His transcendent Self and ineffable Spirit. And everywhere, in His multiple self-formation in the world as well as in His utter transcendence, He is Delight, infinite and immortal Delight. That Delight is the matrix of creation, and it is also its sap and sustenance. All that is felt by us in our ignorance and separative consciousness as pleasure or pain, is the same Delight, split and broken and distorted into various forms, positive and negative, by our egoistic and piecemeal reception of them. When the ignorance of egoism disappears and the unity of existence is realised, the underlying Delight wells up and floods our whole being.

Nowhere, in no philosophy, in no school of self-culture, has this Truth been proclaimed in such categoric terms as in the Vedas and the Upanishads.

Delight is the Alpha and the Omega of the universe. Delight is the origin and goal of all creatures. Delight is the aim and purpose of creation, delight is the impelling force and the mounting rhythm of earthly evolution. The cosmic dance of Siva is the dance of delight, delight multiplied, diversified, and self-diffused in surges of prismatic splendour.

In the Upanishads the relation between the Brahman and the creatures, between the earth and its creatures and objects, between the water and all things, between the winds and all things, between the sun and all things—all these manifold relations have been des-

cribed as relations of honeyed delight. Honey is in all elements, all elements are made of honey, all elements are related to one another in an indissoluble bond of honeyed bliss. The soul is honey to all creatures, and all creatures are honey to the soul. Honey is Harmony, honey is Immortality, honey is imperishable Happiness, honey is Beauty, and honey is Love. Honey holds the worlds together and compels their ascent to their eternal Source, the Brahman, whose name is Delight—तद्वनं नाम, who is the Eater of Sweetness—मध्वद, and the Enjoyer of Bliss—आनन्दभुक्.

The Mother says, "What I speak of is a delight that is perfect peace, light without shadow, harmony; beauty whole and entire and irresistible Power, the Delight that is the Divine Presence itself in its essence, in its will and in its realisations. Delight is the Creator, delight is the fulfiller."¹

But though delight is the essence of the Brahman and the immortal essence of the universe, it is lost upon us in the ignorance of our mind, which has created a division in the indivisible unity of existence. This division has resulted in an actual and phenomenal, though not a real and fundamental, separation between the Brahman and His creation. Perfect delight presupposes perfect mutual possession. "The possessor, that is to say, the Creator, who possesses the creation is at the same time possessed by it. That is the very essence of unity, the source of all delight. But because of division, because the Possessor possesses no more and the possessed also no longer possesses the Possessor, the essential delight is changed into ignorance."² This ignorance, which is the parent of all suffering, is, in reality, a lapse from the consciousness of oneness. A reversal of consciousness, a recovery of the unity which has been lost, and an active union with the omnipresent Reality alone can remove all suffering and restore us to our divine wholeness. Unity of existence is infinity of existence, and infinity is bliss.

But a whole line of spiritual seekers have seen, all down long centuries, not the inalienable delight of existence, the delight that creates and reveals its glories in its creation, but desire as the root of the world and the sole cause of all suffering. The desire to be born,

¹ The Mother : *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April, 1957.

² *Ibid.*

most of them declare, is the basic malady. And the sovereign remedy they prescribe is a rejection of the desire for rebirth and an escape from the world, which is an irreclaimable seminary of desires and cravings. To have done with birth and death is to have attained the highest goal of life. Buddhism discovered suffering to be the very stuff of earthly existence and desire as its root cause, and preached the gospel of the extinction of life by the extinction of desire. It did not care to probe deeper than the surface suffering of life. It took the glaring fact to be the fundamental truth. It did not envisage any spiritual fulfilment here.

This conception is, according to the Mother, “a profound misunderstanding.” It is the “greatest and most serious deformation of all spiritual life in the history of mankind.”¹ This deformation was the cause of the sharp decline of spiritual culture and a woeful depression and depletion of the vitality of the Indian nation. Instead of discovering delight as the womb and essence of all existence, the spiritual seekers suffered the sense of disgust and repulsion, which in most cases mask defeat and frustration, to overpower them. A call to the forest or to the life of the mendicant monk sounded the knell of a robust, full-blooded, life-embracing spirituality. Renunciation of the world was held up as the first condition of spiritual liberation. Earth was spurned and action disparaged and disdained. Social life languished and lost its creative elan. An escapist spirituality glimmered like a distant star in the deepening night of the world.

The Vedic and Upanishadic Rishis found nothing but honey, मधु, in the world. For them blew the honeyed winds, for them the rivers poured forth honey. They thrilled to the all-pervading delight of existence. The Mother says, “There comes a time when one begins to be ready, one may feel everywhere, in each thing, in each movement, in each vibration,—not only in consciousness and beings, not only in trees and plants and all that lives, but in all things that are about you, in an object that you handle, simply the delight of being... you touch a thing and you feel this joy.”²

But so long as the canker of desire lives and thrives in us, this experience of delight can never come. It is only the psychic in us,

¹ The Mother: *Bulletin of Physical Education*, April, 1957.

² *Path to Perfection*—compiled from the Mother's writings by Keshavmurti.

our soul, that possesses this delight, and when we live in our psychic, we thrill to the divine delight as naturally as the trees and plants thrill to the ambient breath of spring.

The hour has struck for a triumphant return to the ancient conception of delight being the origin and goal of all existence. Resurgent spirituality must shake off the toils of the decadent past and orientate itself to the delight of the Divine spread everywhere and the delight of divine union and divine manifestation. It must be able to say with the Vedic Rishis, मधुमत् पार्थिवं रजः (may the dust of the earth be full of honey). Delight alone can conquer ignorance and suffering, falsehood and death, for delight is the Creator of the universe and its fulfiller.

RISHABHCHAND

REVIEW

PRECEPTORS OF ADVAITA *Editor: Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan.* Distributors: Personal Book Shop, 111, Mount Rd. Madras 6. pp. 570, Price Rs.25/-

THIS lavishly got-up volume, commemorating the Diamond Jubilee of the ascension to the Pitha of Kamakoti by Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, gives for the first time a full account of the line of notable Teachers of Advaita within the covers of one book. Beginning with Vasistha and ending with the pontiff of Kanchi, there are about 60 articles on as many propounders of the System—legendary and historical—written by competent persons and ably edited by Dr. Mahadevan. Among the many interesting topics covered in these pages, is an account of the interview given to the Queen of Greece by the Acharya of Kamakoti in 1966. Answering a question on the difficulty of maintaining a meditative attitude in dreams also the Acharya replies: “One need not worry about the kind of dreams one has. One who practises meditation in the waking state, may not, when he goes to the dream state, experience the meditative attitude.... But the spiritual seeker should not be troubled.... What the seeker should be careful about is the waking life. He should devote as much of it as possible to the spiritual quest. If his endeavours in the waking state are in the direction of the Spirit, then gradually in dreams also one’s spiritual nature will be reflected.” (P. 534).

A comprehensive and reliable reference book on Shankara Advaita.

M. P. PANDIT



HEART FULL
OF JOY
TODAY

When the health is good, one looks forward travelling, with a heart full of joy to enjoy the beauty of Nature.

You too should take Sadhana's wonderful medicine, two teaspoonsfull of Mritasanjiban mixed with four teaspoons of Mahadraksharista (six years old), twice a day after meals, to keep you in good health. They remove weariness, increase the appetite and digestive powers and help you get rid of cough and cold.

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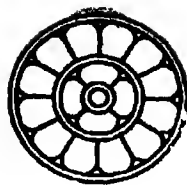
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Sadhana Nagar, Calcutta 48



The Advent



Somebody asked me. -

In the work of Transformation,
who is the slowest to do his part,
man or God?"

I replied, -

man finds that God is too slow
to answer his prayers.

God finds that man is too slow
to receive His influence.

But for the Truth-Consciousness
all is going on as it ought to go.

The ADVENT

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It is the true more than the
new that the poet is after.

—SRI AUROBINDO



THE ADVENT

The Divine gives itself to those who give themselves without reserve and in all their parts to the Divine. For them the calm, the light, the power, the bliss, the freedom, the wideness, the heights of knowledge, the seas of Ananda. - - - Sri Aurobindo.

EDITORIAL

CLING TO TRUTH

THE Life Divine is the life of Truth. It is based on Truth, it is Truth, body and substance—Truth absolute, pure and simple. But it may be asked as we are actually in the ignorant and half ignorant consciousness, in a world of almost total falsehood, is it not necessary, is it not inescapable for us to accept the falsehood for the moment, in order to be able to work in the world and succeed? We have to live in an environment and move in it; if we try to go against it openly, how can we do it practically? As individuals we are infinitesimal particles and the mass of the whole will bear us down each one of us, and crush us out of existence. Truth is all right, but the approach to it needs to be cautious and careful. If falsehood is clever, we too have to be clever. In a game where success is the aim, diplomacy and strategy are not outlawed. You have to accept certain terms of your enemy in order that certain terms of yours might be accepted. You can move to success in this mixed world only through a process of give and take. An absolute saintly attitude is not a thing of practical politics. That is why, to keep their truth unsullied, the ancients

abandoned this field of practical politics, retired to the forest or into the cosy laps of the hills.

Beware, this is the voice of the adversary trying to tempt you by confusing your mind. The path is straight and narrow, it is not wide and comfortable and strewn with roses. To find the Truth, to live the Truth we must begin by finding it in its purity and living it. As is the start, so is the end. Our steadfastness, our faithfulness must be unalloyed, our sincerity of utmost purity. It is Truth alone that leads to Truth, a compromise or semblance leads only to the untruth.

Your diplomacy or duplicity may bring you the coveted result or it may not; but surely it will put a layer of soot upon your soul, push you back one step more into your inconstancy. And if you continue you may become the biggest success in the eyes of the world, but your soul will be nowhere, leaving behind perhaps a hopeless sob in the wilderness.

Has not the Mother said, "Even if there is a particle of falsehood in your expression—in your word or in your act—how can you hope to express the Supreme Truth?" Remember also the words of Sri Aurobindo: "Do not imagine that truth and falsehood, light and darkness, surrender and selfishness can be allowed to dwell together in a house consecrated to the Divine. The transformation must be integral, and integral therefore the rejection of all that withstands it."¹

You cannot elude falsehood or cajole or conjure it. You must stand face to face, gaze with unwinking eyes, the flame of Truth within you constantly ablaze.

If you say you are a small creature and yours a smaller light: your consciousness has not the dimensions of a heroic being, your light will be engulfed, swallowed up and lost in the vast and overwhelming gloom around. Yet small as you are, do what you can, the utmost possible for you; do not let your little flame be tarnished by any contrary or unworthy movement in you: be firm, keep it bright and trimmed. The surrounding darkness may engulf it but cannot smother it; for it is the everlasting, the Divine in you. The body, the flesh may not continue but the holy light remains. The outward frame may have to yield or dissolve in a material surrounding that was

¹ The Mother.

unready—not that the inner consciousness was unready. Indeed the passing body releases the light and it adds to the growing light in the earth's atmosphere. That is the central creed of the Christian martyr. The blood of the martyr is the cement of the Church. This truth of martyrdom, the sacrifice of the faithful was perhaps a necessity at a time when humanity had not risen high enough in consciousness and the earth's atmosphere was more opaque and dull than it is now. The one thing necessary at that stage was an uncompromising living faith, the pure light, the unvacillating flame, a spirit even though small standing against insurmountable odds—that was the way, the martyr's way to stand against the adversary. That is why in the process the God-Man sacrificed himself.

We are in a somewhat different age, under different circumstances. At least our aim is different. We stand firm full square against all temptations, all leaning towards compromise, in the faith and certainty that we shall conquer, we shall not go down but the odds against us shall be pushed back and eliminated. This is the age of Victory.

For two things have happened—two mighty happenings in earth's history, in the course of nature's evolution here: two unseen events that have new-oriented the destiny of earth and mankind. First of all, human consciousness in its essential achievement has risen to a new level of consciousness, although not in the mass, nor generally even in individuals, but there has come a common acquiescence in the being to a higher status of living: proletarianism at its best means nothing else. Human nature has shed something of its mediaeval crudeness and obscurantism and separatism; human mind has been more sharpened and polished and widened so as to receive easily the message of the cosmic rays. There has dawned in the atmosphere the perception or sense of a higher, purer, more luminous and enlightened status of existence. That is, one may say, Nature's gift, the outcome of the millennial, the aeonic working of an aspiration inherent in matter towards light and order. That is the first event. The second one is more occult but more mighty and even devastating. It is the descent, the manifestation, the intervention of a new force here below. They who have seen it know and there is no question. The Veda has declared long ago: The Unseeing have not

the Knowledge, those who have eyes possess the Knowledge.

Today, more than ever, only a little of this pure consciousness will bring you victory, not merely safety from a great perdition. Against the vast, what appears as the all-swallowing gloom of the external space, the inner space is now luminous, doubly luminous and powerful.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

FROM THE *KARMAYOGIN* (1910)

INDIAN NATIONALISM:

THE FUTURE (*Continued*)

YOUTH AND THE BUREAUCRACY

SIR Edward Baker is usually a polite and careful man and a diplomatic official. It is not his fault if the policy he is called upon to carry through is one void of statesmanship and contradictory of all the experience of history. Neither is it his fault if he lacks the necessary weight in the counsels of the Government to make his own ideas prevail. He carries out an odious task with as much courtesy and discretion as the nature of the task will permit and, if we have had to criticise severely the amazing indiscretion foreign to his habits which he was guilty of on a recent occasion, it was with a recognition of the fact that he must have forgotten himself and spoken on the spur of the moment. But as the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy is now constituted, Sir Edward's personal superiority to his own predecessors is of no earthly use to us. We acknowledge the politeness and self-restraint of the wording in his recent advertisement to the educational authorities and the public at large of the inadvisability of allowing students to mix in the approaching Boycott celebration. But his reserve of language cannot succeed in blinding the public, still less the parties addressed, to the real nature of promulgation. To parties circumstanced like the authorities of the Bengal Colleges official or private it is one of those hints which do not differ from orders. The whole Calcutta University has been placed under the heel of the Executive authority and no amount of writhing or wry faces will save principles and professors from the humiliating necessities proper to this servile and degraded position. They have sold themselves for lucre and they must eat the bitter bread of their self-chosen servitude. If they are asked to do the spy's office or to be the instruments for imposing on young men of education and respectability restrictions unexampled outside Russia, it is not theirs to reject

the demand instantly as freeman would indignantly reject such degrading proposals. They must remember that the affiliation of their colleges and the grants which alone can enable them to satisfy the arduous conditions of affiliation depend on the fiat of those who make the demand. These things are in the bond. For the rest, the unwisdom of the wise men and the imprudence of the prudent who stopped the students' strike is becoming more and more apparent. Prudence and wisdom for the proprietors of private schools, for the country it was the worst imprudence and unwisdom. It has turned the training ground of our youth into a means of restraining the progress of our people and denying them that liberty which the other nations of the world enjoy. An university in which the representatives of academic culture are only allowed to keep their position on condition of forfeiting their self-respect and the pen of the pedagogue supplements the baton of the policeman, is no longer worth keeping.

But there are other considerations affecting a wider circle than the educational world, which arise immediately out of this notice. Ever since the beginning of this movement the opponents of progress have with an admirable instinct hit upon the misleading and intimidation of the youth of this country as the best means of thwarting the movement. Their direct attempts having failed, they are now trying to keep down the rising spirit of young India by objurgations addressed to the guardians and by playing on their selfishness and fears. Once the National Education movement was thwarted of its natural course and triumphant success by the leaders, it was easy for the bureaucrats to enforce this policy by gathering up all the authority of the Universities into their hands and using it as a political lever. The loss of education and a career,—this was the menace which they held over the guardians and young men of the country and by the continual flourishing of this weapon they have succeeded in putting back for a while the hour of our national fulfilment. The unwholesome and dangerous effects of denying the aspirations of youth a peaceful outlet, as dangerous to the government as they are unwholesome to the country, the arbiters of official policy in spite of their experience are too blind to realize. Bad leadership, bad because marred by selfishness and timidity, has aided the political experience and insight of the English rulers in inflicting upon the cause a check which still works to hamper

us in our progress. We do not propose to waste space by answering the sophistries which our opponents advance to cover their interested suggestions. It is enough to say in answer that in all civilised countries young men are freely permitted to take part in politics and their want of interest in the chief national activity would be considered a mark of degeneration. It is not the arguments of adversaries but their own personal and class interests which actuate those among us who at the bidding of Anglo-Indians official or unofficial deter our young men from attending public meetings or mixing in the national movement. To these also we can say nothing. Men who can prefer the selfish gratification of their transitory individual needs and interests to the good of the nation are not needed in the new age that is coming. They are there only to exhaust a degraded and backward type which the world and the nation are intended soon to outgrow. If some of them still pose as men of weight and leading, it is only for a moment. They will vanish and the whole earth heave a sigh of relief that that type at least is gone for ever.

But to the young men of Bengal we have word to say. The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development and it is the young who must create it. But it is also a world of truth, courage, justice, lofty aspiration and straight-forward fulfilment which we seek to create. For the coward, for the self-seeker, for the talker who goes forward at the beginning and afterwards leaves his fellows in the lurch there is no place in the future of this movement. A brave, frank, clean-hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future can be built. This seventh of August in this year 1910 is not an ordinary occasion. It is a test, a winnowing fan, a separator of the wheat and the chaff. Because it is so, Sir Edward Baker has been inspired by an overruling Providence to publish his notification and the authorities of colleges to act according to their kind. The question is put not to these but to the young men who are asked under pain of academical penalties to abstain from an activity which is both their right and their duty. Let them remember that they disobey no law of the land and no provision of morality if they attend the celebration of the new nation's birthday. They will only disobey what professes to be an exercise of school discipline, but is nothing of the kind. It does not fall within

the province of a school master to dictate what shall be the political opinions and activities of his pupils, nor are college professors concerned with what their students may do outside the precincts of college and hostel in the hours of their lawful liberty, so long as there is no infringement of law and morality. The attempt is an usurpation of the rightful authority of guardians or in the case of those who have come of age, of their right to govern their own personal action. There only remains the question of self-interest. That is a point we leave to their hearts and consciences, whether they shall prefer their own interests or their country's. But if once they decide for the nobler part, let them stand by the choice they have made. God does not want falterers and flinchers for his work, nor does want unstable enthusiasts who cannot maintain the energy of their first movements. Secondly, let them not only stand by their choice but stand by their comrades. Unless they develop the corporate spirit and the sense of honour which refuses to save one self by the sacrifice of one's comrades in action when that sacrifice can be averted by standing together, they will not be fit for the work they will have to do when they are a little older. Whatever they do let them do as a body, whatever they suffer let them suffer as a body, leaving out the coward and the falterer but once they are compact, never loosing or allowing anything to break that compactness. If they can act in this spirit, heeding no unpatriotic counsels from whatever source they come, then let them follow their duty and their conscience, but let them do nothing in a light even if fervent enthusiasm, moving forward without due consideration and then showing a weakness unworthy of the nation to which they belong and the work to which they have been called.

NATIONALIST ORGANISATION

The time has now come when it is imperative in the interests of the Nationalist party that its forces should be organised for united deliberation and effective work. A great deal depends on the care and foresight with which the character and methods of organisation are elaborated at the beginning, for any mistake now may mean trouble and temporary disorganisation hereafter. It is not the easy problem of providing instruments for the working of a set of political ideas

in a country where political thought has always been clear and definite and no repressive laws or police harassment can be directed against the dissemination of just past political ideals and lawful political activities. We have to face the jealousy, suspicion and hostility of an all-powerful vested interest which it is our avowed object to replace by Indian agencies, the opposition, not always over-nice in its methods, of a rich and influential section of our own country men, and the vagueness of thought and indecisiveness of action common to the great bulk of our people even when they have been deeply touched by Nationalist sentiment and ideals. To form a centre of order, clear, full of powerful thought, swift effectiveness, free and orderly deliberation, disciplined and well planned action must be the object of any organisation that we shall form. Two sets of qualities which ought not to be but often are conflicting, are needed for success; resolute courage and a frank and faithful adherence to principle on one side and wariness and policy on the other.

The first we are to avoid is the tendency to perpetuate or imitate old institutions or lines of action which are growing out of date. The Nationalist party is a young and progressive force born of tendencies, aims and necessities which were foreign to the nineteenth century, and being a party of the future and not of the immediate past, it must look, in all it does and creates, not to the past but to the future. There are still in the party the relics of the old desire to raise up a rival Congress and assert our claim to be part legatees of the institution which came to violent end at Surat. Our claim stands and, if a real Congress is again erected, it must be with the Nationalists within it and not excluded. The strength of the demand in the country for an United Congress is a sufficient vindication of the claim. But if we try still further to enforce by holding a rival session and calling it the Congress, we shall take an ill-advised step calculated to weaken us instead of developing our strength. A technical justification may be advanced by inviting men of all shades of opinion to such a session, but as a matter of fact none are likely to attend a session summoned by pronounced Nationalists unless they are pronounced Nationalists themselves. A United Congress can be effectively summoned only if we are able to effect a combination of Nationalists, advanced Moderates and that large section of opinion which, without having pronounced views, are

eager to revive a public body in which all opinions can meet and work together for the good of the country. Such a combination would soon reduce Sir Pherozeshah's Rump Congress to the lifeless and meagre phantasm which it must in any case become with the lapse of time and the open development of the Mehta-Morley alliance. But to create another Rump Congress on the Nationalist side would be to confound confusion yet worse without any compensating gain. It would moreover throw on the shoulders of the Nationalists a portion of the blame for perpetuating the split, which now rests entirely on the other side.

If a Nationalist Rump Congress is inadvisable and inconsistent with the dignity of the Nationalist party and its aversion to mere catch-words and shame, an imitation of the forms and workings of the old Congress is also inadvisable. We were never satisfied with those forms and that working. The three days show, the excessively festal aspect of the occasion, the monstrous preponderance of speech and resolution-passing over action and work, the want of true democratic rule and order, the weary waste of formal oratory without any practical use or object, the incapacity of the assembly for grappling with the real problems of our national existence and progress, the anxiety to avoid public discussion which is the lifebreath of democratic politics, these and many other defects made the Congress in our view an instrument ill-made, wasteful of money and energy, and the centre of a false conception of political deliberation and action. If we imitate the Congress, we contract all the faults of the Congress. Neither can we get any help from the proceedings of the Nationalist Conference which met at Surat; for that was a loose and informal body which only considered certain immediate questions and emergencies arising out of the Surat session. Yet a centre of deliberation and the consideration of past progress and future policy is essential to the building of the Nationalist party into an effective force conscious of and controlling its mission and activities. We shall indicate briefly the main principles on which we think the organisation of such a body should be based.

The first question is of the scope and object of the institution. In the first place, we must avoid the mistake of making it a festival or a show occasion intended to excite enthusiasm and propagate sentiment. That was a function which the Indian National Congress had,

perhaps inevitably, to perform, but a body which tries to be at once a deliberative assembly and a national festival, must inevitably tend to establish theatrical and holiday character at the expense of the practical and deliberative. National festivals and days of ceremony are the best means of creating enthusiasms and sentiment, that is the function of occasions like the 7th August and the 16th October, the Sivaji Utsav and similar celebrations. We must resolutely eschew all vestiges of the old festival aspect of our political bodies and make our assembly severely practical and matter-of-fact body. Secondly, we must clearly recognise that a body meeting once a year cannot be an effective centre of actual yearlong work; it can only be an instrument for deliberation and determination of policy and a centre of reference for whose consideration and adjudgement the actually accomplished work of the year may, in its main features and the sum of its fulfilment, be submitted. The practical work must be done by quite different organisations, provincial and local, carrying the policy fixed by the deliberative body but differently constituted; for as the object of an executive body is entirely different from the object of a deliberative body, so its constitution, rules and procedure must be entirely different. In fact our All-India body must be not a Congress or Conference even, but a Council, and since, in spite of Shakespeare and Sir Baikunthanath Sen, there is much in a name and it largely helps to determine our attitude towards the thing, let us call our body not the Nationalist Congress, Convention or Conference, but the Nationalist Council.

If the body is to be a Council, its dimensions must be of such a character as to be manageable and allow of effective discussion in the short time at our disposal. A spectacular Congress or Conference gains by numbers, a Council is hampered by them. Therefore the maximum number of delegates must be fixed and apportioned to the different parts of the nation according to their numbers. Secondly, in the proceedings themselves all elements of useless ornament and redundancy must be purged out, such as the long Presidential Speech, the Reception Committee Chairman's speech and the division of proceedings into the secret and effective Subjects Committee sittings and the public display of oratory in the full assembly. The first two features are obviously useless for our purpose and a mere waste of valu-

able time. With the disappearance of the spectacular aspect usually associated with our public bodies, the reason for the mere display of oratory also disappears. The only other utility of the double sitting is that the full assembly forms a Court of Appeal from the decision of the Subjects Committee and an opportunity to the minority for publicly dissenting from any decision by a majority which they might otherwise be supposed to have endorsed. The necessity for the first function arises from the imperfectly representative character of the Subjects Committee as it is at present elected; the necessity for the second function from the absence of publicity in its proceedings. If the whole Council sits as Subject Committee, the necessity for the Court of Appeal or the public assertion of dissent will not occur. The only justification for the existence of the Subject Committee in our present political bodies is their unwieldy proportions, the only reason for its secrecy the attempt to conceal all difficulties in the way of coming to an unanimous conclusion; and neither of these reasons will have any existence in a Nationalist Council. The subjects can be fixed by a small executive body existing throughout the year, which will be in charge of all questions that may arise in connection with this Council, subject to approval or censure by the Council itself in its annual meeting. The resolutions on these subjects can be formed in the Council and additional resolutions can be brought forward, if the Council approves. All unnecessary oratory should be avoided and resolutions formulating policy of a standing character can be first got out of the way by a formal motion of them from the Chair. After this preliminary, the Council can go into committee to consider, approve or amend the report of progress made by the secretaries for the past year, and, on the second day, resolutions demanding debate and deliberation may be discussed in full Council.

The next question is the procedure and constitution. We desire no autocratic President, no oligarchy of ex-Presidents and long-established officials, no looseness of procedure putting a premium on party tricks and unfair rulings. The only body of officials will be two general secretaries and two secretaries for each province forming the executive body of the Council, who will be for the most part recorders of provincial work and summoners of the Council and will have no power to direct or control its procedure. Instead of an autocratic and influ-

ential President we should have a Chairman who will not intervene in the discussion with his views, but confine himself for guiding the deliberations as an administrator of fixed rules of procedure which he will not have the power to depart from, modify or amplify. He must therefore be, like the Speaker of the House of Commons, not an active and prominent leader who cannot be spared from the discussion but a man of some position in the party whose probity and fairness can be universally trusted.

The last question is that of the electorate. We throw out the suggestion that, in the first place, we should cease to be bound by the British provincial units which are the creation of historical circumstances connected with the gradual conquest of India by the English traders, and have no correspondence with the natural divisions of the people, and should adopt divisions which will be favourable to the working out of the Nationalist policy. And since the main work of the party will have to be done through the vernacular, the most natural convenient divisions will be those of the half dozen or more great literary languages, minor or dialectical tongues of inferior vitality being thrown under the great vernaculars to which they geographically or by kinship belong. It was the programme of the Nationalist party in Bengal to create a register of voters throughout the country, who could form a real electorate. Such a conception would have been impracticable in the old days when the people at large took no active part in politics; it was fast approaching the region of practicability when the repressions broke the natural course of our national development and introduced elements of arbitrary interference from above and feeble and sporadic Terrorist reactions from below, the after-swell of which still disturbs the country. Sj. Bepin Chandra Pal has written advocating the creation of a register of Nationalists, as a basis for organisation. This is, no doubt, the only sound basis for a thoroughly democratic organisation, but so long as the after-swell lasts and tempest may return, so long as the police misrule does not give way to the complete restoration of law and order, a register of Nationalists would only be a register of victims for investigators of the Lalmohan and Mazarul Huq type to harass with arrests, house-searches binding down under securities, prosecutions with no evidence or tainted evidence, and the other weapons which the Criminal Procedure and

Penal Code supply, and against which there can be no sufficient redress under an autocratic regime not responsible to any popular body, leaning on the police rather than on the people and master of the judiciary. In these circumstances we can only create convenient limited electorates for the election of our council delegates, waiting a more favourable condition of things for democratising the base of our structure.

On these principles we can establish a deliberative body which will give shape, centrality and consistency to Nationalist propaganda and work all over the country. We invite the attention of the Nationalist workers throughout India to our suggestion, the proposal has been made to hold a meeting of Nationalists at Calcutta at which a definite scheme and rules may be submitted and, as far as possible, adopted in action so that the work may not be delayed. No United Congress is possible this year, and if or when it comes the existence of our body which avowedly is a party organisation will not interfere with our joining it.

THE NATIONAL FUND

We have received a letter from Mr. A. C. Sen of Delhi in which he recommends that National Fund should be utilised for a Swadeshi Museum. The necessity of such an institution has been engaging our attention for some time, and no one can dispute the immense advantages that will accrue from it; but the institution if properly conceived and managed needs only a small initial fund for its support in the first stages of its existence and will soon become self-supporting. It is quite unnecessary to divert to it a large sum like National Fund. Meanwhile, if we allow divided counsels to obtain as to the disposal of the fund, the only result will be that it will remain where it is, useless and unused. We note that the opposition to the proposal unanimously passed at Hughly emanates from a few individuals whose justification for professing to speak in the name of the subscribers is not yet clear, the Anglo-Indian papers who are interested in preventing the erection of the hall, and, among Indian papers, the *Hindu Patriot*, the *Indian Mirror* and the *Indian Nation*, all of them papers of a limi-

ted circulation and opposed to the national movement in its most vital features. We are not aware that any organ of the popular party, Moderate or Nationalist, has opposed the sense of the country as formulated in Sj. Surendranath Banerji's resolution at Hughly.

SRI AUROBINDO

SRI AUROBINDO AND SHANKARACHARYA — A COMPARATIVE STUDY

THE *Aurobindonian* dynamism or integralism is indeed a natural and logical conclusion of the Morganian and the Alexanderian evolutionism wedded to the *Aupanishadic Vedāntism*. Sri Aurobindo, let us remember, is always on his strictest guard to avoid the fallacy of extremism of either kind—excess or defect. But it does not denote an endorsement of the Aristotelian principle of Golden Mean. He, in fact, heartily embraces the philosophy of integralism which resolves the apparent and seemingly irreconcilable contradictions in an all-inclusive, all-absorptive and all-comprehending organic and hyper-organic unity. So much so that, he begins his *magnum opus* with two negations, materialistic and idealistic, and pinpoints therein their inner contradictions and errors of unreservedly reducing either conscious-force to matter or matter to conscious-force, in order to develop his own philosophy of integralism.

Now, follows a comparative account of the *Aurobindonian* integralism and the *Śaṅkarite Advaitism*.

BRAHMAN

Śaṅkara's Brahman is the static unity of existence, consciousness and bliss, which transcends God, world, individualised soul, *Māyā*, space, time and say all finitude. For Sri Aurobindo, *Brahman* is a dynamic unity of existence, conscious-force, bliss and supermind. It is simultaneously both transcendent and immanent, dynamic and static, being and becoming, without forms and with forms etc. *Brahman*, for Sri Aurobindo has an eternal creative power which being an integral and real part and parcel of *Brahman* creates a real world. *Śaṅkarite Advaitism*, by denying the reality of God, cosmos and *Māyā* etc. consummates in barren absolutism. It saps the very possibilities of creation and evolution, even if it posits an arbitrary concept of *Māyā* which is said to be ineffable. Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, annuls nothing but embraces all. He does not explain away *Māyā* by calling it ineffable but considers it an inseparably inherent essence of *Brah-*

man. To quote him "Force is inherent in Existence. *Shiva* and *Kali*, *Brahman* and *Shakti* are one and not two who are separable. Force inherent in existence may be at rest or it may be in motion, but when it is at rest, it exists none the less and is not abolished, diminished or in any way essentially altered."¹ It is quite inconceivable to accept that the Force is an alien thing which enters the Absolute from outside or that it was non-existent and came into existence at some moment. We must, therefore, conclude that eternal *status* and *dynamis*, the mobile and the immobile *Brahman* are both the same Reality. *Dynamis* and *status* are equally real and none of them is an illusion.

SOUL

In the *Śaṅkarite Vedānta*, the soul is no other than *Brahman*. It is eternal, immutable, static, partless, ever-liberated, uncaused, detached, pure and non-dual reality which is always indicated by 'thisness', not by 'whatness' which is superimposed on it. It, being a non-dual principle, is immediate and self-proved. *Śaṅkara* admits of no change or mutation in the soul. *Vidyāranya Muni* calls it eternal and formless. *Sureśvarācārya* pronounces it to be unmodified and unmoulded. Thus, the soul, for the *Śaṅkarites*, is a non-dual unity having no possibility of multiplicity. On the other hand, *Sri Aurobindo* affirms in the soul both oneness and manyness, eternity and ephemerality, permanency and dynamicity, universality and individuality, being and non-being, non-duality and duality, involution and evolution, and so on and so forth. The soul, for him, is an all-embracing, all-comprehending and all-absorbing unitary consciousness. It is said, in its self-experience, to live eternally in the presence of the Absolute. To quote him, "Our unity with world being is the consciousness of a Self which at one and the same time cosmicises in the world and individualises through the individual *Purusha*, and both in that world-being and in this individual being and in all individual beings it is aware of the same Self manifesting and experiencing its various manifestations. That then is a self which must be one in its being,—otherwise we could not have this expe-

¹ Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, p. 78.

rience of unity,—and yet must be capable in its very unity of cosmic differentiation and multiple individuality.”¹

NATURE

The nature, by the *Śaṅkarite* non-dualists, is called illusory or false (*mithyā*). Since *Brahman* is the non-dual reality, says *Śaṅkara*, the nature with its multitudinous forms must needs be a false appearance. According to *Citsukhācārya*, the nature is an apparent modification of *Brahman*, while it (the nature) is a substantial transformation of *Māyā* as, for example, the water of the clouds. *Sureśvarācārya* says that *Māyā* is *triguṇātmikā* (made of three *guṇas*, i.e. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*) and that the nature, being a product of this *triguṇātmikā* *Māyā*, is *triguṇātmikā* as well. Hence, as *Māyā* means that which is nought yet appears to be, so nature means. *Sri Aurobindo* rejects the *Śaṅkarite* doctrine of the nature as a false appearance. The non-duality of *Brahman*, according to him, does not exclude the nature and its multiplicity from itself but comprehends it in an indescribable unitary consciousness where the mentally unresolved contradictions of one and many, of permanence and change, of unity and multiplicity, are eternally resolved in a supramental consciousness. The nature is as much real and divine as the soul. For both are the real transformations of *Brahman*. It is the principle of nature, says *Sri Aurobindo*, upon which life stands as upon a pedestal or out of which it evolves like the form of a many-branching tree out of its encasing seed.² The nature is said to work out man in a living laboratory of the animal. Man himself may well be a thinking and living laboratory in whom and with whose conscious cooperation it wills to work out the superman, the God.³ Hence, the nature not only progressively unfolds what is asleep or involved in it but also overtly realises that which it secretly is. In sharp contrast to *Śaṅkara*’s nature, *Sri Aurobindo*’s nature is not only breathing and living but also creative and conscious. “*Prakṛti*”, says *Sri Aurobindo*, “presents itself as an inconscient energy in the material world, but as the scale of consciousness rises, she

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

² *Ibid.*, p. 213.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

reveals herself more and more as a conscious force and we perceive that even her inconscience concealed a secret consciousness".¹

MAYA

The whole superstructure of the *Samkarite Vedānta* is built on the foundation of its pivotal principle of *Adhyāsa* or superimposition. Superimposition, defines *Samkara* in his prolegomena to *Vedānta Bhāṣya*, is the appearance by way of remembrance of something previously seen somewhere. It is, in other words, the awareness of that which it is not (*atasmistadbuddhiḥ*). So much so that, it requires two things—the substratum of superimposition and the object superimposed. Granted that there is nothing but non-dual *Brahman*, *Samkara* fails to satisfactorily answer as to from where the object superimposed arises.² This failure to account for superimposition involves him in an inescapable Eleatic dualism of being and non-being, *Brahman* and *Māyā* which shatters his whole system to the ground. True *Advaita Vedānta*, according to *Sri Aurobindo* does not annul *Māyā* from *Brahman*, but accepts it as a real, creative and inseparable power of *Brahman*. To quote him, "the real Monism, the true *Advaita* is that which admits all things as the one *Brahman* and does not seek to bisect its existence into two incompatible entities, an eternal Truth and Falsehood, *Brahman* and not-*Brahman*, Self and not-Self, a real Self and an unreal, yet perpetual *Māyā*. If it is true that the self alone exists, it must also be true that all is the Self."² *Sri Aurobindo* takes an integral view of *Saccidānanda*. *Saccidānanda* is an equipoised unity or a harmonious togetherness of the supercosmic, the cosmic and the individual. It manifests itself in the cosmos as well as the individual by its inseparable force for its own play. Hence from downside to upside and upside to downside there is but one reality pierced through and through in the whole universe. Consequently nothing is unreal in the cosmos but everything is full of infinite possibilities.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 316

² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

LIBERATION

Liberation from bondage, according to the *Śamkarites*, consists in one's differentiating the reality of the soul from the unreality of the ego, the intelligence, the vital principle, the senses, the body and the world with women, son, land and riches. It means cessation of the tricycle of birth, death and rebirth with consequent realisation of one's non-duality with *Brahman*. It is that state of all-perfection of the so-called individual soul where *Brahman* alone shines. It is the state of positive delight. It is, verily, *Saccidānanda* in its entirety. We must here be on our strictest guard against the misunderstanding as to its being the novel creation or the purification of some old mental state. Liberation, in fact, is the awareness of what is, was and will be always there, even in the state of bondage, though of course not discovered then. It may well be compared to the awareness of the pen in one's own hand by one who forgot its possession there and looked for it here and there. *Sri Aurobindo* rejects this *Śamkarite* account of liberation as individualistic, ascetic, unprofitable and valueless. In sharp contrast to the *Śamkarite* idea of individual salvation which leads us to regard other souls as if they were figments of our imagination and their salvation meaningless, our soul alone as if it were entirely real and its salvation the one thing that matters, *Sri Aurobindo* forwards the idea of cosmic salvation which asks us to fulfil God integrally and satisfy the conditions of His self-revelation. Moreover, the idea of individual salvation is a misnomer. "Individual salvation", says *Sri Aurobindo*, "can have no real sense, if existence in the cosmos is itself an illusion."¹ Hence, he hails the idea of the divination of individual as well cosmic being integrally. The integral divination of the individual being does not mean the relinquishment of the lower physical, vital and mental life which is its ground but to transform it in the light of the higher supramental life which is its *sum-mum bonum*. The salvation of the individual soul, says *Sri Aurobindo*, "is the point of Light at which the intended complete self-manifestation in the Many begins to emerge. But the liberated soul extends its perception of unity horizontally as well as vertically. Its unity with

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

the transcendent One is incomplete without the cosmic many...the divine soul reproduces itself in similar liberated souls as the animal reproduces itself in similar body."¹ This process of divine reproduction continues so long as the commonwealth of gnostic beings is not established on the earth. Thus salvation is neither escape from the world, nor abnegation of worldly relation, nor cessation of the tricycle of birth, death and rebirth, but making of individual as well as cosmic destiny by bringing down the "Life Divine" into the individual and thereby manifesting the divinity in the cosmos.

PATH-WAY TO GOD

The *Śaṅkarites* hold that *Jñāna-Yoga* (path of knowledge) is the only means or path to liberation. Liberation cannot be attained, says Samkara, without knowledge. In his *Śārīraka Bhāṣya* on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, he strongly remarks that knowledge-fire burns all actions to ashes and accomplishes liberation. But *Sri Aurobindo* lays no exclusive emphasis on one particular *Yoga*. He is an ardent advocate of the *Synthesis of Yoga* which seeks to synthesise all the extant *Yogas*, especially the *Jñāna*, *Bhakti*, *Karma* and *Rāja Yogas*. Besides, all other *Yogas* lay an exclusive stress on one or more of the different powers of man. For example, Jnana Yoga exclusively employs the intellectual and mental power, Bhakti Yoga the emotional power, Karma Yoga the moral and spiritual power and Raja Yoga the physical and vital power as a channel to God. But the *Synthesis of Yoga* employs, develops, conserves, controls, coordinates, concentrates and utilises all the different powers,—physical, vital, mental, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual—for the supreme purpose of comprehending God. This is also known as integral Yoga or Purna Yoga. Defining this integral Yoga, *Sri Aurobindo* says, "Yoga is that which, having found the Transcendent, can return upon the universe and possess it, retaining the power freely to descend as well as ascend the great stair of existence." It is thus, integral not only in respect of the means and the path but also in respect of its goal.

In conclusion, we can safely say that *Sri Aurobindo* being an inte-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

gralist, not only synthesises all the extant evolutionary and emergent philosophies in a consistent whole but also adds to them something more which lacked in them all. He seems to have put an end to the old controversy as to whether or not the world is real, by emphasising the reality and divinity of the world of experience. So much so that, he rejects the *Śaṅkarite Māyā* as an arbitrary principle and formulates a unique conception of *Māyā* as an integral part and parcel of *Brahman* which is an equipoise of existence, consciousness-force and bliss.

R. K. GARG

OLD BENGALI MYSTIC POEMS

XVIII

All the three worlds I have moved through at ease
And now I am fast asleep revelling in the supreme happiness.
O my woman, how playful you are!
On either side the troop of caste people
And in the middle this outcaste Kapali.
O woman, you have upset everything;
Without rhyme or reason you have shelved the moon away.
Some call you a harlot,
But the wise wear you as a necklace.
Kanhū sings: she is a lustful outcaste,
And a greater wanton there is none.

NOTE:

You have to cross the three worlds—physical, *vital* and mental, pass through the three states of consciousness—*jāgrat* (waking), *swapna* (dreaming) and *susupta* (sleeping)—to enjoy the transcendent delight. It is the ecstasy of union with one's soul, the divine Beloved secreted within our inner heart. This divinity, this beloved deity is utter freedom—no mental reservations or restrictions, no vital preferences or prejudices, no physical rules or regulations.

XIX

Birth and Death are the drum and the kettle,
Mind and Life are the cymbals and tambours:
The bugles blow vying with peals of vivat.
Lo, Kanhū goes to marry his bride.
This marriage will bring him a new birth,
The dowry being the supreme states of consciousness.
The day and the night pass in the game of enjoyment,
In the company of Yoginis till the dawn breaks.

One who is attached to the outcaste woman
Never leaves for a moment the maddening intoxicant.

NOTES:

Outcaste—because she is cast out of the normal human consciousness, which does not recognise the worth of such a status.

Woman—because it is Power, Shakti and Delight (ananda).

Yoginis—all the attendant powers that aid and vivify the game.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

TEACHINGS OF THE MOTHER

PLEASURE AND PAIN

THE pleasures of life, so passionately pursued by the majority of men, are the worst cheats imaginable. They cloud the mind, fuddle the heart, and set up a hectic fever in the blood. They rob them of their high thoughts and hopes and plunge them into the grossness of an animal life. They generate self-forgetfulness, laxity of will, and an easy proneness to temptations. The Mother sounds a solemn note of warning to spiritual seekers against hunting after pleasures. "You must deny yourself pleasures, if you wish to be open to the joy of living in integral beauty and hamony." One can take pleasure in anything one does, but one must not do it for the sake of pleasure. The joy of our real being wells up spontaneously and infuses itself automatically into anything we do. Because it is self-existent, it does not depend upon anything. But pleasures are a derivative reaction—they are a response of our surface nature to the touches of the world. But, since life is a tangle of dualities or contrary forces, pleasure and pain succeed each other in an unending cycle. To seek for pleasure is to court pain and suffering, which follow inevitably in its wake. That is why in Buddhist philosophy pleasures are equated with pain, for they are fleeting and delusive. All that is transient is painful, according to it. If we observe closely and in a detached way, we cannot fail to see that at the very heart of pleasure there is a growing discontent, as if something within us flinched and winced away from it. The grosser pleasures darken and deaden our consciousness. They degrade and enfeeble our nature. It is only in a state of ignorance and infatuation that one runs after pleasures.

The Upanishads speak of *śreyas* and *preyas*: "The good and the pleasant come to a man and the thoughtful man turns all around them and distinguishes. The wise chooses out the Good from the pleasant, but the dull soul chooses the pleasant rather than the getting of the good and its having". The pleasant binds and despoils him, but, spell-bound and dazed, he knows it not. And even when he seems to perceive it, he finds himself too weak to resist and escape.

What, then, is the destiny of the pleasure-hunters? Are they doomed to wallow in the mud-honey, sinking lower and lower in darkness and despair without any hope of redemption? Surely, in God's

dispensation, such cannot be the ultimate destiny of any human being. Those who are blinded will recover their vision, the drunk will become sober, the dissolute will learn restraint. Evolution will bring awakening.

It is pain and suffering that usually function as effective agents of the force of evolution. They act as an eye-opener, a teacher and a lever of ascent. When they come, one instinctively seeks to run away from them "seeking forgetfulness in excitement and pleasure." But that is cowardice, says the Mother. They have come to awaken and instruct, salvage and save. The quicker one learns the lesson they have come to teach, the less reason they will have for their persistence. "And when we know the secret, it is no longer possible for us to suffer; for the secret reveals to us at once the cause, the origin of the suffering and the way to transcend it."

It is foolish to think that pleasures come to us as a reward for our good actions (Karma) in our past lives and pain and suffering as punishment for our evil actions. The law of evolution does not act in that simplistic way—it is much too complex and multi-directional to be reduced to a neat graph for our ethical mind to read. Pain and suffering almost always come as a blessing in disguise. They expose the vulnerable points of our nature. They sting us into consciousness. They call forth our courage and strength and impart salutary experiences. They show us how helplessly dependent we are in life upon external things and happenings. But for pain and suffering, we could hardly evolve and grow into our divine manhood. It is futile to try to run away from them. Like the Hound of Heaven in Thomp-son's poem, they pursue us "down the nights and down the days" till we have heeded the warning they give and learnt the lesson they have come to teach. None can be great, none can emerge into freedom and joy without having had to pass through the fire-baptism of suffering.

It is wrong to think that suffering comes from poverty or material want. There are any number of people who are happy and contented in spite of their poverty. "The causes of suffering are innumerable, although the origin of suffering comes from the initial action of an anti-divine will." But whether it is physical or mental, all suffering has to be faced with courage and confidence in the Divine Grace, endured so long as it lasts, and finally conquered and eliminated.

It is again wrong to blame others and the conditions and circumstances of our life for our suffering. It is idle to grumble and complain. The conditions and circumstances of life are an objective reflection of our subjective state. They are just what we have to pass through in order to progress in life. They serve as a catalyst in our transition from ignorance to Knowledge. They do not cause our suffering, and to find fault with them is to ignore the real cause and prolong the suffering. The causes are innumerable, as the Mother says, but they are all within us and not without. To discover them and remove them is the only cure for suffering.

“To seek suffering and pain is a morbid attitude which is to be avoided.” Some religious people, both Eastern and Western, take a perverse delight in making a cult of suffering. They cherish it as a badge, a holy insignia of religious piety or austerity. A famous Vaishnava devotee would not let a single vermin drop out of his leprous ulcers lest they should starve. He seemed to enjoy their feast of his blood and pus. There was heroism, no doubt, in such an act of endurance, but it was an endurance in a misguided faith. It was an outrage on the Divine who dwells in the temple of the body and on the delight of existence which seeks to express itself in its own right in terrestrial life. An ideal seeker of God should be a seeker of the eternal Delight of God as well as a seeker of His Light and Peace. To banish pain and suffering from the face of the globe should be the aspiration and endeavour of all lovers of the Divine, for suffering is antidivine, it is an actual negation of God in His own creation. It has to be transmuted into Ananda.

How to banish suffering from life? The Mother says, to get rid of the ego and rise to a higher consciousness is the only way. We should learn the lesson that suffering teaches, dislodge the usurper ego from its throne and rise to a plane of consciousness where the joy of being is integral and infinite. We have, then, to invade this dim vale of tears with the immortal Light and Bliss of the Divine and flood its frozen bases with them till inconscience and ignorance, the parents of undelight or suffering, are lit up into Consciousness and Knowledge and suffering vanishes for evermore.

RISHABHCHAND

SPIRITUAL DESTINY OF THE WAKING STATE

X. THE DESCENT OF THE SUPERMIND

I know that I can lift man's soul to God,
I know that he can bring the Immortal down.

(SRI AUROBINDO, *Savitri* Bk. XI, C.I. p. 771)

The integral perfection can come only by a mounting ascent of the lowest into the highest and an incessant descent of the highest into the lowest till all becomes one at once solid block and plastic sea-stuff of the Truth infinite and eternal.

(SRI AUROBINDO, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 568)

There are different statuses of the divine consciousness. There are also different statuses of transformation. First is the psychic transformation, in which all is in contact with the Divine through the individual psychic consciousness. Next is the spiritual transformation in which all is merged in the Divine in the cosmic consciousness. Third is the supramental transformation in which all becomes supramentalised in the divine gnostic consciousness. It is only with the latter that there can begin the complete transformation of mind, life and body—in my sense of completeness.

(*Sri Aurobindo On Himself and On the Mother*. pp. 181-82)

IN our attempt to chalk out the steps following which an embodied being here upon earth may hope to transfigure his waking existence so much so that a divinely dynamic life can flower out in the earthly garden, we have come to the point that an essential preliminary condition is for our soul to consciously ascend to the supernal grades of being and power of the self-manifesting spirit, that intervene between our normal mind and the Truth-Consciousness of Supermind.

Of course, it is true that without actually ascending to these higher spiritual mental planes and permanently living there, if we can

open ourselves from below to their knowledge and spiritual influences, we can somewhat spiritualise our normal waking being and consciousness. But the spiritual change effected in this way is never profound or wide in its scope. It touches only the fringe of our dynamic existence. In order to have an entire consciousness and power of Being, it is altogether indispensable that we gather up our consciousness and rise out of the sphere of ignorant mind into the radiant higher altitudes of the Spirit.

And these ascents must be made in full awareness and not merely in the immobile trance-state of absorbed superconscience. For in the latter case, on the return to the waking consciousness from these temporary sojourns, only an indeterminate spiritual impression may abide but not much of dynamic effect. In order to have the dynamis of the higher spiritual grades of being active and organised in our waking life, we must first effectuate “a *conscious* heightening and widening into immense ranges of new being, new consciousness, new potentialities of action.”¹

But this ascension of our consciousness to these higher luminous planes, even if permanently centred there, does not suffice for the spiritual transformation of our being and nature. The permanent ascent *from* the lower to the higher consciousness must be followed by the complementary process of a permanent descent of the higher *into* the lower. The transmutation of our present modes of being and activities into spiritual values leading to the transfiguration of our waking existence necessitates then not merely an ascension to the planes above nor even the exertion from there of an indirect pressure and influence upon our lower being but the bringing down of the Power and Light of the supernal reaches in the very field of our normal being, consciousness and action. For “there is a dynamism proper to the spiritual consciousness whose nature is Light, Power, Ananda, Peace, Knowledge, infinite Widnenss, and that *must be possessed and descend* into the whole being. *Otherwise one can get mukti but not perfection or transformation* (except a relative psycho-spiritual change).” (Italics ours)²

¹ *The Life Divine*. p. 657.

² *Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother*, p. 175.

The descent of the spiritual potencies and forces of the higher planes from the Higher Mind to the Overmind is thus the third necessary motion following the other two of ascension and permanent stationing above. In this process of percolation, downpour or influx, occur "an increasing inflow from above, an experience of reception and retention of the descending spirit or its powers and elements of consciousness."¹ When this phase is more or less completed, we say that the being and nature has undergone *spiritual transformation*, a transformation that links the manifested existence with what lies beyond and above it.

But even this is not enough for our goal. For, the process of spiritualisation brings about mostly a subjective transformation, the instrumental Nature remaining as before full of many disabilities and deficiencies. Even the Overmind, the summit-reach of our spiritual mind-range, fails to effectuate a complete change of Nature, for this too is "subject to limitations in the working of the effective Knowledge, limitations in the working of the Power, subject to a partial and limited Truth."²

For the full and radical transformation what is indispensable is the direct intervention and the unveiled action of the supramental Gnosis in our earth-existence and earth-nature. But that can come about only when a prior ascent to the plane of Supermind is followed by the supramental descent in the field of terrestrial manifestation.

But what precisely are the difficulties offered by our present being and nature, that cannot be satisfactorily met even by the highest spiritual-mental powers? What are the lacunae involved in the process of spiritual transformation? The essential difficulty comes from the fact that we are evolutionary creatures. Our evolution has started from the apparently blank bosom of Inconscience and this dark heritage of original Nescience is still weighing very much heavily upon our nature. Our normal being is almost wholly moulded out of the Inconscience and "it is this substance of nescience that has to be transformed into a substance of superconscience, a substance in which consciousness and a spiritual awareness are always there even

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 811.

² *On Yoga II*, p. 112.

when they are not active, not expressed.... Till that is done, the nescience invades or encompasses or even swallows up and absorbs into its oblivious darkness all that enters into it; it compels the descending light to compromise with the lesser light it enters: there is a mixture, a diminution and dilution of itself, a diminution, a modification, an incomplete authenticity of its truth and power.”¹

It is because of this blind opposing Necessity, this dark attachment to the already established and seemingly inexorable Laws of the Ignorance that the higher spiritual lights and powers, even those of the Overmind, coming down in the obscurity of our physical consciousness lose much of their transforming potency and become instead mutilated, circumscribed and not altogether dynamically effective.

Thus a perfect transfiguration of our lower nature is a far cry if we would rely on the spiritual-mental powers alone. We may feel indeed in our inner consciousness, luminous and liberated and ecstatic, but our outer being and nature will still go on in their old unregenerate way, bringing in periods of dull obscurations and unwanted reactions due to the play of *guṇas*. “The power of divinely illumined mind may be immense compared with ordinary powers, but it will still be subject to incapacity and there can be no perfect correspondence between the force of the effective will and the light of the idea which inspires it. *The infinite Presence may be there in status, but dynamis of the operations of nature still belongs to the lower Prakriti*, must follow its triple modes of working and cannot give any adequate form to the greatness within it. This is the tragedy of ineffectivity, of the hiatus between ideal and effective will...”² (italics ours)

This is the reason why it has been always found that a subjective spirituality concentrated on the change of the inner being alone, leaving the outer nature to go its old way, is much easier to accomplish than to objectivise this spirituality in the dynamic life of free world-action. In the course of our spiritual sadhana, our totality of existence very soon and very easily dissociates into two fields, an inner one and an outer one. The inner being and nature has always

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 853.

² *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 543.

a much less fettered gait: it awakens easily enough, receives freely the higher spiritual influences and gets more or less transformed. But the external surface self and nature are mostly moulded by the forces of the established Ignorance and the original Nescience. And hence they are tardy in awakening, sluggish in receiving and impervious to uninhibited assimilation. It is, for this reason, "always easier to spiritualise the inner self-sufficient parts than to transform the outer action; a perfection of introspective, indwelling... spirituality aloof from the world or self-protected against it is easier than a perfection of the whole nature in a dynamic, kinetic spirituality objectivised in the life, embracing the world, master of its environment, sovereign in its commerce with world-nature."¹

But whether easy of fulfilment or not, this is what we have placed before us as *our* goal: an integral transformation of our outer being and nature as well as that of the inner one, entailing the divinisation of our waking physical existence and of the dynamic life of action. And as we have mentioned before, it is only the overt intervention of the divine supermind in our earth-nature that can negative the dark Necessity of downward pull of our present evolutionary existence and usher in the establishment of the Life Divine.

And for that an ascent out of the lower hemisphere topped by the Overmind onto the plane of supramental Gnosis becomes the first necessity. For, the dynamic as well as the static realisation of Sachchidananda cannot be *inseparably* and *simultaneously* had except through supermind, the Truth-Consciousness of the divine Reality. "The universe is dynamism, movement—the essential experience of Sachchidananda apart from the dynamism and movement is static. The full dynamic truth of Sachchidananda and the universe and its consequence cannot be grasped by any other consciousness than the supermind, because the instrumentation in all other [lower] planes is inferior and there is therefore a disparity between the fullness of the static experience and the incompleteness of the dynamic power, knowledge, result of the inferior light and power of other planes. This is the reason why the consciousness of the other spiritual planes, even if it descends, can make no radical change in the earth-conscious-

¹ *The Life Divine*, p. 853.

ness, it can only modify or enrich it.”¹

So we see that this sublime ascent from below, from out of the spiritual mind’s sphere, into the supramental plane of being and consciousness, is the first radical step on the way to the fulfilment we have been seeking in our Yoga. But this ascension is not enough: it has to be completed by a supreme descent from above, the descent of the Supermind in earth-nature. For, it is only in the divine Truth-Consciousness or Supermind that the power of dynamic transformation can be *integral* and *absolute*.

As a matter of fact, “only the supermind can thus *descend without losing* its full power of action; for its action is always *intrinsic* and *automatic*, its will and knowledge identical and the result commensurate: its nature is a self-achieving Truth-consciousness....² Only the supramental Force can *entirely* overcome [the] difficulty of the fundamental Nescience; for with it enters an opposite and luminous imperative Necessity which underlies all things and is the original and final self-determining truth-force of the self-existence Infinite. This greater luminous spiritual Necessity and its sovereign imperative *alone* can displace or entirely penetrate, transform into itself and so replace the blind Ananke of the Inconscience.”³ (Italics ours)

So, this is the second capital movement: the descent of the supermind in earth-existence and earth-nature. But something much more has to be achieved before our goal of divine and dynamic life upon earth becomes a realised fact of existence. *The involved Supermind has to emerge to meet the descending Supermind.*

As a matter of fact, even now, the supramental principle is here secretly lodged in all existence, even behind the grossest materiality. It is the supermind that is sustaining and governing this manifested lower worlds by its self-concealed power and law. But at present the supermind is involved and hidden behind this lower triplicity of mind, life and matter: it cannot act overtly or in its own intrinsic power, because of the absence of proper instrumentation in the earth-nature. Its “power veils itself and [its] law works unseen through the shackled limitations and limping deformations of the lesser rule of our physi-

¹ *On Yoga* II, p. 262.

² *The Life Divine*, p. 815.

³ *The Life Divine* pp. 854 55.

cal, vital, mental Nature.”¹

Now if the supramental change of the whole substance of our being and of all its modes and movements has at all to be made perfect and integral, this involved Supermind in Nature must be liberated upon earth, join with the descending Supermind, prepare the ground for the divine dynamic play of Supernature (*Parā Prakṛti*) and act as “an overtly operative power in the terrestrial workings..., —in the same way in which thinking Mind has been established through the human evolution as an overtly operative power in Life and Matter. This would mean the appearance in the evolution of a gnostic being or Purusha and a gnostic Prakriti, a gnostic Nature. There must be an emergent supramental Consciousness-Force liberated and active within the terrestrial whole and an organised supramental instrumentation of the Spirit in the life and the body...”²

It is in this way that the spiritual penury of our waking existence can be radically remedied and one can enjoy a divine life here upon earth itself, even in the physical embodied existence, without any “need to shun existence or plunge into the annihilation of the spiritual Person in some self-extinguishing Nirvana.”³

JUGAL KISHORE MUKHERJI

¹ *The Synthesis of Yoga*, p. 540.

² *The Life Divine*, p. 855.

³ *The Supramental Manifestation*, p. 85.

THE LIFE DIVINE—AN OUTLINE

31

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE IGNORANCE

WE know only a part even of our superficial life and conscious becoming, fastening only on a little of our experience of self and things, memorising less, using still less for knowledge and action. What we reject, Nature stores and uses in our development, for the most part by her subconscious action. Our waking self is only a superimposition, a visible summit; the great body of our being is submerged or subliminal.

The subliminal self perceives, remembers, understands, uses all that we fail to perceive, remember or use. It provides all the material of our surface being which is only a selection from its wider existence and activity. It is only the physical and vital part of our existence which is, properly speaking, subconscious; the subliminal self is the true mental being and in relation to our waking mind it is rather secretly circumconscient; for it envelops as well as supports. Of all this larger part of our being we are ignorant.

We are ignorant also of the superconscient, that which we ordinarily call spirit or oversoul; yet this we find to be our highest and widest self, Sachchidananda creating and governing all that we are and become by His divine Maya. We are ignorant of the subliminal sea of our being which casts up the wave of our superficial existence; we are ignorant also of the superconscient ether of our being which constitutes, contains, overroofs and governs both the subliminal sea and the superficial wave.

We are ignorant of ourselves in Time, for we know only a part of the present life we are living; yet that exists only by all our past of which we are ignorant and its trend is determined by all our future of which we are still more ignorant. For our superconscient Self is eternal in its being and Time is only one of its modes, our subliminal is eternal in its becoming and Time is its infinite field of experience.

We are equally ignorant of the world, holding it to be not-self,

ignorant of ourselves in Space; for the world is one Self developing the movement of its conscious force in its self-conceptive extension as Space. We confine ourselves in our consciousness to a single knot of the one indivisible Matter, a single eddy of the one indivisible Life, a single station of the one indivisible Mind, a single soul-manifestation of the one indivisible Spirit. Yet it is only by knowing the one that this individual mind, life, body, soul can know itself or its action.

Thus ignorance of self is the nature of our mind, but an ignorance full of the impulse towards self-possession and self-knowledge. A many-sided Ignorance striving to become an all-embracing Knowledge is the definition of man the mental being.

32

THE INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE

The ignorance in which we live is the sevenfold self-ignorance; an ignorance of the Absolute and knowledge only of the relations of being and becoming; an ignorance of our timeless and immutable self-existence and knowledge only of the cosmic becoming; an ignorance of our cosmic self and knowledge only of our egoistic existence; an ignorance of our eternal becoming in Time and knowledge only of the one life present to our memory; an ignorance of our larger and complex being in the world and knowledge only of our surface waking existence; an ignorance of the higher principles of our existence and knowledge only of the life, mind and body; an ignorance therefore of the right law and enjoyment of living and a knowledge only of the confused strife of the dualities.

Our conception of the Ignorance determines our conception of the knowledge and by that the aim of our existence, which coincides with the ideal of the earlier Vedic thought.

We confirm by it our rejection of the extreme views which hold the absolute Non-existence or absolute Existence to be alone true and the relative world of being and becoming an ignorance to be renounced. There is the unmanifest Absolute and there is its manifestation; to fulfil the manifestation and live in the sense of it as the Absolute manifesting himself is the Knowledge.

We reject the view that regards the One, Infinite, Formless, Spirit, Super-conscious as the sole truth and the opposite terms as unreal or eventually false and vain values to be abandoned. We accept it and them also not as alternates, but as simultaneous values of the manifestation and their union in our consciousness and right use of their relations as the knowledge.

We reject equally the views that affirm a pluralistic Becoming without Being or see Mind, Life or Matter as the original principle, and we reject the limitation to our apparent Nature which is their practical conclusion. Becoming, as the working out of the energies of Being, Mind, Life and Matter as inferior terms of the higher divine Nature to be illumined, uplifted, transformed by the higher terms is our view of the knowledge.

We reject also intermediate theories like that which make God and cosmos one,—perceiving as we do that cosmos exists in God who exceeds it and not God by the cosmos,—or like that which seeks to abandon the earth and find fulfilment only in heavens where the Many enjoy the presence of the One—.perceiving, as we do, that there is a higher knowledge which leads to complete identity and that divine life based upon it need not be confined to heavens beyond, but may embrace the earth also.

Ignorance is an initial state of knowledge, the essence of which is to create a sense of limitation and division; it is this which we have to overcome and transcend without creating an opposite self-limitation. The integral aim of our existence can only be the possession and power and joy of our integral self-knowledge.

SRI AUROBINDO

LALLA THE MYSTIC

THOUGH Kashmir is considered to be land of birth of Indian History, very little of biographical information is available of many of her illustrious personalities, especially her saints and poets. This is particularly so in case of Lalleshwari, one of the celebrated minstrels of God whose songs and sayings hang upon the lips of the people of Kashmir even today, irrespective of their religious faiths. Drawing attention to this paucity of material, Sri Rudrappa—a scholar-judge who has done considerable research work in Kashmir Shaivism—observes in his monograph on Lallayogeshwari,¹ that one can only reconstruct the broad outlines of her life by means of internal evidence in her recorded sayings supplemented by carefully sifted references in local literature which contain legends and stories of miracles attributed to her.

We know that she was born of Brahmin parentage in the 14th century A.D. in Pandrentan, near Srinagar. She was married at the age of twelve and underwent great hardship at the hands of her mother-in-law for 12 years before she left her home and set out in search of Truth. In the course of her travels she met Siddhanatha who become her Guru and initiated her in the teachings and the path of the Shaivas. Lalleshwari learnt assiduously, practised the discipline, achieved concrete results and in her wanderings preached what she had realised. She spoke in epigrams, in paradoxes with mystic overtones, struck at the roots of age-long prejudices and put her stamp on the general mind of the people. It is only a part of these utterances of hers that have been recorded in their original Kashmiri tongue. A digest of them is available in sixty Sanskrit verses by one Bhaskaracharya and Sri Rudrappa studies them in five sections; Aspiration, Knowledge Self-enquiry, Practice and Quest, Experience, Realisation. Besides these *sūktis*, he has rendered in Kannada verse a collection of her sayings bearing on *sādhana* and this section is a happy complement to the other which is more philosophical. His explanations and comments are brief but most helpful.

¹ *Lallayogeshwari*, Published by Prasaraṅga, Mysore University, Mysore. Price Rs. 2.00

As observed earlier, at a young age Lalleshwari left her home in quest of God and wandered from place to place, meeting people, visiting centres of pilgrimage but ultimately she discovered that God was all the time seated within herself. She exclaims:

"I, Lalla, came from afar in search of my Lord Shankara. Going here and there, everywhere, I finally beheld Him in this very body.

"To get sight of Him I went to holy places of worship. In lauding His excellences I got exhausted. With all that I was sad that I saw not the supreme Lord. Then I deliberated in my mind upon the Truth of the Lord and discovered that He was within myself.

"Meditate upon the Lord who dwells in thy body; do not go in search elsewhere."

The Truth, she emphasises, is beyond the knowledge of the mind; she recalls how she had to "forget her learning before she could get the Bliss of the Divine."

Liberation, she declares, is to be attained by and in consciousness, *cittaikasādhyā*. "The mind is a wild horse that gallops a million leagues in a moment and it needs to be steadied and reined. The means therefor is the regulation of Breath."

There are two currents of breath that are to be followed, separated and held—the lower breath that issues from the navel, 'warm with the fire in the solar plexus'; the upper breath that flows from the crown of the head, 'cool with the rays of the moon'. As the commentator notes, in the Yogic tradition the Moon shines in the head and the Sun below in the navel region. The breath above is *prāṇa* and the breath below is *apāna*. If these two are arrested and held, the nerve channel Sushumna gets opened and there begins a change in the consciousness. The way to control and direct the life-current that is at the base of all the distracting mental and nervous activities is Pranayama. Speaking in metaphors, she says: "I must see Him anyhow but there is an ocean between us. My mind is feeble and how can it serve as a boat? Find an aide. The Life Current is thy friend; hold him tight and with his skilled device he will reach thee to the yonder shore."

"He who stops the mind-activity by means of pranayama and to whom by this practice there is neither thirst nor hunger, he is not affected by the vicissitudes of the world; his life is fulfilled!"

Once this outer activity of the being is controlled and a stability in silence attained, the movement of Yoga takes one deeper and deeper. "If you be wise, enter within; lo, Shiva is there. No need to search elsewhere, friend, trust in my word." "All the ritual acts of worship disappear in the Mantra; the Mantra (based as it is on Sound) sinks down in the mind and when the mind sets, all indeed melts away. The seer and the seen become one in Chit, sheer Consciousness."

"Whatever works I do they turn into worship, whatever words I utter they become Mantra. Whatever comes by circumstance that becomes the means of worship; all is turned into consecration."

A person who lives in this state, indeed, "knows everything but stays as if unknowing, hears everything but keeps as if unhearing, sees all but acts blind."

Casting a look back she cries:

"Long have I striven, struggled, long have I lain in waiting. Only when it dawned on me that I am none other than Shiva Himself that my heart became full, my aspiration reached its mark, my understanding became complete and my agony disappeared."

"Cutting asunder the forest growths of Desire and its brood, I gained the nectar of Knowledge. Controlling the current of Prana, I have won victory over Nature. Purifying the mind in the fire of Devotion, I have attained to the state of Shiva."

The way of Lalla is comprehensive. Mind (knowledge-discrimination), Heart (bhakti), Body (consecration in work) —all enter as limbs of one movement.¹

And this is the crowning peroration, best quoted in the original:

mayäs hyuh nah prakäö kune
payäs hyuh nah tirthako'n
dayäs hyuh nah bändhav kune
bayäs hyuh nah sukhako'n.

(There is no light brighter than the Light of Brahman-Knowledge,
No pilgrimage greater than the Quest for the Supreme Self,

¹ *Vide*: "After exhausting the impulsions of Karma, the being got cleansed, the heart was purified; then was it perceived that all activities move at the Will of Shiva,"

No friend truer than the Compassion of the Lord,
No delight higher than the joy of running to His Will.)

The *sententiae* of Lalleshwari have an appeal and a relevance to seekers in whatever stage of development. As stated by Sri Rudrappa in his cogent analysis: "She narrates the cream of her experiences directly and in the sequence in which profound truths are to be realised. She describes the physical changes consequent on spiritual realisations and the concentration that follows the arrest of the operations of the life-currents. She indicates the manner in which the purity, stability and deligence that accrue from mental concentration are to be promoted; also the way in which worldly and traditional occupations are to be conducted by one in the perfected state. She establishes the impossibility of following literally all the social customs and emphasises that it is more important to maintain the right spirit and attitude than to conform outwardly, whatever one's station in life. Having elaborated upon the results that follow the control of the life-force and concentration of the mental faculty, the vision in which external things are to be seen and the detachment that ensues, she goes on to speak of the culturing of the inner state. She shows how the flowings of the mind which are the bases for the deformations in the universe are to be transcended and the direct experience of pure Consciousness attained and how in truth the universe is not different from this pure Consciousness. So too she states how worship and adoration of Form, pilgrimage etc. are helpful at certain stages but prove to be otherwise at others. She expounds, both on the basis of reasoned argument and her own experience, how when one realises that the universe is not distinct from the One Consciousness, one also comes to realise that one is a part of the all-pervading Shiva and that the limitation imposed in oneself on the qualities of Shiva e.g. all-knowledge etc. are the real cause of one's individuation. Having realised this state, she declares that she has no relatives and she is no relation of any—she is untouched. And she speaks of all her activities as the play of the supreme Shakti and her life a flow of the supreme Ananda."

REVIEWS

A Bibliography of Indian Philosophy, Part I and Part II
Published by The *Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar* Research Endowment
Committee, Madras. Price Rs. 5/- each part.

MORE than two decades ago Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar had called for a comprehensive Bibliography of all available works in Indian and European languages dealing with Indian Philosophy and Psychology. And with a generosity so characteristic of him he followed it up with an endowment for the purpose. The first two parts of this Bibliography which are now released deal with the Upanishads, Gita, Nyaya, Sankhya, Yoga, Purya Mimamsa, Advaita, Vishistadvaita, Dvaita, Shaiva Siddhanta, Vedas, Grihya Sutras, Sruta Sutras, Dharma Sutras, Vedic expositions, Mantra and Shakta Tantra, Bhakti, Jainism, Buddhism.

We are sorry to note, however, that the work falls far short of our expectations. It is understood that such compilations cannot be perfect. But there are so many omissions in the lists—some of them major ones—that the Bibliography can hardly be a sufficient guide. We refer particularly to the sections on Vedas, Upanishads and Shakta Tantras. Old, imperfect, editions are entered, but later, definitive editions are not mentioned. The information supplied is not uniform. The work is uneven and suffers for want of an organising hand.

We would implore the authorities of this project to eliminate these drawbacks before proceeding further.

M. P. PANDIT

Ulakap Perum Kavignarkal (Great Poets of the World) by *Sri P.Kodandaraman*, M.A., B.L. Publishers: Manivachakar Noolakam, 12-B, Mela Sannadhi, Chidambaram. Price Pr. 3.50.

The renaissance in Tamil language and literature in the early part of this century has been brought about mainly by freeing the

written language from the yoke of out-moded and recondite phraseology and making it a sure vehicle for writing popular short stories, novels and fictions. The success in this kind of writing had been so alluring that most writers of repute had not turned their talents to write on serious subjects. The educated Tamilian was looking to English for his serious pursuits in life while taking to Tamil as a pastime and a hobby. The outlook of the modern Tamilian has now completely changed and this is not a little due to the consistent efforts of writers like Sri Kodandaraman.

As a serious writer, Sri Kodandaraman has carved out a niche for himself in the hearts of the discerning Tamils and his numerous works have rightly earned for him an honoured place in the making of modern Tamil literature. As an intelligent and intelligible interpreter of Sri Aurobindo and his Yoga in Tamil, he has earned the gratitude of all earnest seekers in Tamil Nad.

The book under review is on the Great Poets of the World. The selective list comprises of Valmiki, Vyasa, Homer, Virgil, Kalidasa, Elango, Kamban, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Shelly, Hugo, Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Bharatiyar. Beginning appropriately with the *ādi kavi*, the Primordial Poet, the essays include a short biography of the poet, wherever possible, a rapid survey of his important works and a critical appraisal of his contribution to world literature. "Art is a sadhana, a Yoga Sadhana: and the Poet is a Yogin, his genius is the gift of Divine Grace. A great poet waits for the Word. The Word from High Above may come to him in a minute or it may take days for it to descend. The true poet knows how to wait patiently on divine inspiration", says the author.

Discussing the difference between an ordinary poet and a great poet, *Mahākavi*, the author says that the ordinary poet sings about things that he has perceived through his senses. His poetry is on the vital or at the most on the mental plane. On the other hand, the great poet sees the Word arising from the innermost depth or descending from the highest heights and catches it in his poetry. His poetry is verily the Mantra, the soul-force gathered in the poise of his being. The author illustrates convincingly how the list of great poets he has chosen answers to the above definition of a great poet. He pays glowing tributes to Sri Aurobindo as the Seer-Poet and hails his life-work

“SAVITRI” as the precursor of Future Poetry. His essay on Bharatiyar is full of feeling and he points out that the one poem “Dance of Dissolution” is enough to earn for Bharati the place of a great poet. Whether the author is dealing with Kamban, or Shelly, Elango or Virgil, Valmiki or Hugo, in all the essays he displays deep insight, sincere understanding and rare sympathy. His style is pure but not obscure, charming but not cheap.

The whole book is elevating.

S. SHANKARANARAYANAN

